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ISRAEL'S FUTURE.

LECTURES

DELIVERED IN THE LOCK CHAPEL, IN LENT 1852.

BY THE

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MINISTER OF THE CHAPEL.

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PREFACE.

"ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.) *"All Scripture!"* Then there is no exception admissible in this matter: and no exception either in the estimate we form of it, or the regard we pay to it, must be made: "all" alike claims our attention: all alike is "given" by the same authority—*God's!* all alike is "given" for the same end—*our profit;* and no exception whatever, I repeat, can be admissible, or must be made. Yet exceptions are made, constantly made, and especially with respect to that subject of Scripture revelation the considera-

tion of which is the immediate object of the following Lectures—PROPHECY! *Prophecy is excepted*—passed over by many, almost entirely disregarded, yea, practically adjudged of little or no account. And yet, is not *prophecy* included in "all Scripture?" If not, let us have a new canon! If it be, why is it excepted, and what the plea for neglecting its study? Is it that prophecy is obscure, difficult, "hard to be understood?" Be it so; and so are the doctrines of the Trinity, Incarnation, and New Birth; and, by the testimony of Peter, so are "some things" in all Paul's epistles, (2 Pet. iii. 16;) and, therefore, some men are sceptics, even infidels, and Socinians; and some men are students—touching the Bible—only of the Proverbs of Solomon, and of the Sermon on the Mount! But are they right? Certainly they are—if others are right in rejecting prophecy and its consideration, because of its assumed obscurity and difficulty; they only carry out the principle of *exception* to its legitimate results; the *plea* of justification is as sound and available in one case as the other.

We are bid to "search the Scriptures;" prophecy is a part of Scripture, therefore we are bid to search prophecy. The duty is plain and positive. We sin against God and our own souls if we neglect it. We must, therefore, discharge it as best we can. We must study prophecy as well as the rest of Scrip-

ture; and to help our infirmities, and meet the difficulties, God, who gave the Spirit for the utterance of prophecy, promises the same Spirit for the understanding of prophecy: we must ask for that Spirit, and so enter on the work with humility and simplicity of purpose, and not be afraid. It is better, incomparably better to study prophecy, and make mistakes in the interpretation, than not to study prophecy for fear of making mistakes: in the latter case we run directly counter to God's bidding, in the former, we *do what we can*, and such effort, whether directed to the obedience of truth, or its investigation, never was, and never will be, without a blessing. In fact, the very *study of prophecy is, in itself, exceedingly beneficial:* apart from the question of the amount of prophetical light and knowledge that may be acquired thereby, it directly and necessarily associates the mind with "*things to come;*" it substantiates invisible things; it converts prospective interests into present realities: it invigorates faith by bringing near to view its proper objects, and of necessity induces, in the believer's case, a detachment from earthly trifles, a heavenly frame and affection, and a holy, happy anticipation of final bliss—*It is, and must be, exceedingly beneficial!* Hence, as might be expected, and, as if to remove all doubt on the subject, a special blessing

is annexed to the reading and hearing the words of that book, which is not only beyond all others prophetical, but obscurely prophetical, in the canon of Scripture — the Book of Revelation: "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein; for the time is at hand." (Rev. i. 3.)

In regard to reading and profiting by man's expositions of prophetical subjects, there is but one rule to be attended to, but that one is absolute— "*Search the Scriptures whether these things are so.*" It is not ingenuity of system, nor plausibility of theory, nor beauty of illustration, nor even apparent consistency of interpretation, but *manifest agreement with the written Word of God, and nothing else,* that determines the worth of an exposition, or entitles it to our credit. Look for this—and it ought to need but little search; the agreement ought to be obvious, on the surface, and if not there, the probability is, it is *nowhere!* The book may then be clever, a bright effusion of human intellect, but it is not of God, nor the effusion of His Spirit; it may entertain and gratify the mind, but will not edify and nourish the immortal soul! *Search, then, the Scriptures;* compare carefully, strictly, what is written by man, with what "is written" by God; and

believe, and receive accordingly: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is* because there is no light in them." "*Search, then,*" *I repeat,* "*the Scriptures,*" and thus separate the precious from the vile; yes, even in the same book, for there is no book so "precious," but that there is to be found in it also much of the "vile," *much* the result of human ignorance! *much* the result of human prejudice! *much* the result of human systematizing! *much* that needs to be winnowed away, and to which the "Fan" of God's Word must be wisely, but firmly applied.

The following Lectures, I may be allowed to observe, were not originally designed for publication. The idea was suggested, during their delivery, by many who heard them; and as they were preached merely from notes, their composition devolved on the author, and has been executed, since the close of Lent, and in the midst of ordinary, and not light ministerial labours. This is pleaded not in excuse, or extenuation of faults which may exist in *doctrines* or *views,* but solely of inaccuracy and imperfection in style and expression—for these latter the author asks *favour,* for the former *none:* let the views propounded be subjected to the "Fan," if any think it worth while to apply it, and truth at all rates be made apparent. Truth is the author's object, and if

these Lectures fail to *exhibit* truth, may they then help to *elicit* truth; in either case, service will be done for the cause of God; and in either case, therefore, the author will thank God, and give Him glory.

68 Gloucester Terrace, Hyde Park,
July 17, 1852.

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ISRAEL'S FUTURE.

LECTURE I.

ISRAEL'S BLINDNESS IN PART.

"FOR I WOULD NOT, BRETHREN, THAT YE SHOULD BE IGNORANT OF THIS MYSTERY, LEST YE SHOULD BE WISE IN YOUR OWN CONCEITS; THAT BLINDNESS IN PART IS HAPPENED TO ISRAEL, UNTIL THE FULNESS OF THE GENTILES BE COME IN. AND SO ALL ISRAEL SHALL BE SAVED."—Romans xi. 25, 26.

So then we cannot, with impunity, remain ignorant of Israel's history, and Israel's prospects. Be the difficulty or disinclination, which is felt to attach to the investigation of the subject, what it may, yet the duty of the thing is, in the text before us, unequivocally exhibited. It can only be escaped at the risk of considerable damage to our spiritual well-being, even that of "becoming wise in our own conceits." Many, it is true, seem to think otherwise, and virtually, at least, deny this: "What," say they, "is Israel to us? Israel as Israel, or at least as a distinctive object of interest,

ceases to exist; Israel, as such, has passed away; Israelites are unto us as others—either as Christian brethren by the reception of Jesus, or as heathen men and publicans by the rejection of Jesus! What, then, have we to do with Israel as Israel? Enough, it is, at all rates, to win them, if we can, individually, to Christ; and, default of this, let them alone!" But is it so—or ought it to be so? Is Israel to be thus disposed of? Is this God's mind concerning Israel, or God's mind concerning our care and regard for Israel? What says our text? Here it is plainly taught that Christians may not be, must not be, ignorant of Israel, as Israel; that God has a great purpose concerning that people; and that Christians must, except at great peril, make themselves acquainted with that purpose. A mystery, it is admitted, envelops their prospects, but the knowledge of their prospects being essential to Christian charity and Christian humility, the solution of the mystery is furnished in the text that avows it; and thus, while the duty of investigation remains uncancelled, the excuse for neglecting it is utterly removed.

There is no alternative, then, if we believe God, but to give the subject a faithful and prayerful consideration; our duty and interest alike demand it; and no pains should be spared, whereby we may attain a clear understanding of the prospective history of *that* people, who, by God's special appointment, have stood out from the beginning, in distinctive peculiarity, from all other people on the face of the earth; who yet, despite all their sin and all their condemnation, are "beloved for the fathers' sakes;" and whose reco-

very to God and the land of promise is not only matter of clearest prediction and brightest hope to themselves, but matter, too, of such amazing moment to the world at large, that the accomplishment of the former shall actually hasten the regeneration of the latter; and when "God shall build up Zion," then, and not till then, "shall the earth bring forth her increase," and "saving health be known among all nations," Psalm lxvii.

Justly, then, may the subject of Israel's prospective history arrest our attention, and occupy a portion of our time. Let us enter on its investigation with humble prayer, that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ will preserve us from vain and unprofitable speculation, and guide us into all important and salutary truth. The consideration of the particular topics connected with Israel, to which your attention will be called in these lectures, will, necessarily, involve the discussion of other leading prophetical subjects; embracing, in the whole, far too extended a field of investigation to be treated otherwise than in a very concise, and, at best, by myself, in a very imperfect manner. I shall, however, be well satisfied, and not a little thankful to God, if the result of my efforts shall be to induce, on the part of any, a keener interest in the Word of Prophecy, and a more diligent study of God's truth in reference to the momentous concerns of the age to come.

Before we embark on the "prospective history of Israel," it is quite essential that we should review her present state; and to this, therefore, as a preliminary step, the first lecture will be devoted. My text is

very explicit on this point, "Blindness in part is happened unto Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved." Her present state, then, is this: She is blind, but her blindness is in part, both as to degree and duration. To these two particulars we will direct our attention.

I. ISRAEL'S BLINDNESS.
II. THE BLINDNESS IN ITS LIMITATION.

I. ISRAEL'S BLINDNESS.

1. What is this Blindness—to what does it refer?

It is, of course, spiritual in its nature; and it refers to the things of God, the things that belong to her peace, "the day of her visitation," and what that day involved. These are the things to which she was blind; the light shone, but her eyes were closed against it; Jehovah came, manifested in the flesh—the Messiah, He of whom Moses and the Prophets wrote, came—"came to His own," but "His own received Him not;" they saw "no beauty in Him that they should desire Him;" "He was despised and rejected,"—despised, but especially of them!—rejected, but especially of them! This was their blindness: the vail was over their minds—the vail which still remains untaken away (2 Cor. iii. 15),—and they saw not. He was among them, but they knew Him not! —daily among them, in their temple and their synagogue, in their houses and at their feasts, but they knew Him not! He did such works — works of mercy and grace, tenderness and power, as none other

ever did: He fulfilled, to the letter, all the predictions of the Scriptures concerning Messiah; He reasoned with them out of those Scriptures; He deplored their wilful and desperate case; He wept over them, and stretched out the arms of His mercy towards them, "Oh! if thou hadst known, even thou, in this thy day!" but they knew not! They were devoid of knowledge, their intellects were darkened, their eyes were blinded; in them was fulfilled the prophecy which saith, "By hearing ye shall hear and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see and not perceive; for this people's heart is waxed gross, and *their* ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with *their* ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them." Matthew xiii. 14, 15. This, then, was their blindness; and this, alas! is their blindness still. They saw not Christ as the Christ of God, neither do they see Him now; they reject the Saviour; the Gospel is hid from them; they account themselves unworthy of eternal life; and, terrible but inevitable consequence, "the wrath of God abideth upon them!"

2. What was the cause of their Blindness?

Not *that*, of course, which is commonly urged, namely, the rejection of Christ; for this, as we have seen, is just the consequence of their blindness, and cannot therefore be its cause. It was to Christ as the object that their blindness related in the first instance, as it is to Christ that it still relates even now. "If our gospel be hid," says St Paul, "it is hid to them that are lost,"—the gospel being hid is

the *consequence* in every case, and not the *cause* of man's blind or lost estate; and so in Israel's case, the Saviour being hid was not, and is not, the cause, but simply the consequence, of their blindness. For the cause, then, we must look further back in their history, or rather indeed must look at their history throughout, even from the Exodus from Egypt until the time of the Lord's advent; for throughout the whole of it is the cause of their blindness to be seen in melancholy and painful operation. It was, in a word, their determined and ceaseless obstinacy, their pride and rebellion, their contempt of God's teaching, their utter ingratitude for all his mercies—mercies unexampled, unprecedented in the history of the world. It was their whole deportment, evil from the beginning, and evil throughout; the same which brought upon them God's signal rebuke recorded in Deut. ix. 7, 8: "Remember, *and* forget not, how thou provokedst the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord;" the same also which called from the martyr Stephen the stern reproof, "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers; who received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it."

This it was which caused their blindness! this it was which evoked the terrible denunciation found in Isaiah vi. 9, 10, already quoted from Matthew xiii., where its fulfilment is maintained by our Lord. "Go and tell this people, hear ye, indeed, but understand not; and see ye, indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." Here their blindness is judicially pronounced, positively predicted; yet only, and evidently, the righteous confirmation of that, which they had deliberately and wilfully inflicted on themselves—they would not see, so they shall not see; they would not hear, so they shall not hear; they would not understand, so they shall not understand. Christ shall come, but they shall not receive him; Christ shall work, but they shall not observe him; Christ shall teach, but they shall not understand him; Christ shall save, but they shall not believe Him. Yea, and worse still, instead of a "rock of salvation," and "tried foundation-stone," he shall be "for a stone of stumbling, and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel, for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And many among them shall stumble, and fall, and be broken, and be snared, and be taken." It is all the consequence of their own sin; the natural, and, morally speaking, necessary result of their own conduct! Terrible result, terrible sentence and penalty denounced upon them, and, as we ourselves see, realised by them! But can we marvel

when we thus review their history? A history, from first to last, of grace and kindness on God's part, of evil and rebellion on theirs? No sooner did God make a covenant with them than they brake it, (Heb. viii. 9;) they vexed his Holy Spirit, disbelieved his promises and threats, made themselves idols to worship, associated with God's enemies, vilified his name in the sight of the heathen, insulted his servants, put his prophets to death—yea, which of the prophets did they not slay? So skilled were they in this murderous work, so fitted, by exercise and habit, for its execution, that, according to the testimony of God, "it could not be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem." No wonder, surely, that God should "swear in his wrath that they should not enter into his rest;" no wonder that he should consign them judicially to the state,—"the evil heart of unbelief,"—which they themselves had resolutely chosen; no wonder, that seeing they so utterly abused what they "had," more should not be given unto them, (Matthew xiii. 12, see the context and connection;) no wonder, I say, that since they fast closed their own eyes by such systematic and unvarying hatred of light, God should not open them forcibly when the Light came, but should leave them to their blindness, yea, to the astounding delusion, that—the LIGHT itself was Darkness, that the Christ of God was a blasphemer, and that incarnate Deity had a "devil and was mad!" No wonder, I say, at their blindness—*was there not cause?*

3. What was the consequence of their Blindness?

We have seen in a measure. It was the rejection of Jesus, even under the most appalling delusion, and insane imagination. But this was not all, nor, bad as it was, worst of all—at least in relation to themselves. A worse sin, a more fatal sin, was yet to be perpetrated, and we believe has been perpetrated by Israel, as a consequence of their blindness, even that of *the rejection of the Holy Ghost!* On a memorable occasion, when the Scribes and Pharisees were charging on our Lord that He cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of devils, the Lord, after disposing of the charge, on the ground of its palpable absurdity, even that Satan should cast out Satan!—added directly the solemn admonition, "Verily, I say unto you, all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation;" this, no doubt, was intended at the time as a salutary and most gracious, though solemn warning, calculated to prevent the commission of the sin adverted to; and to which, by their present conduct, they seemed fast approximating. For it was not that they had even then committed the sin — they had sinned indeed, and most grievously, on that very occasion; they had blasphemed the Son, ascribing His miracles of mercy and grace to the power of Beelzebub; and this it was which gave rise to the admonition in question. Their blasphemies against the Son proved their readiness and ripeness for blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; they were verging on the commission

of this: another step and they would plunge into the unpardonable sin; the Lord would therefore arrest them before the deed was done; He declared their danger, and solemnly, affectionately warned them of it; His counsel is virtually this—'You have sinned against me; you have blasphemed the Son; go on thus, persevere yet a little longer on this terrible principle of opposition to God; carry it out under the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, soon to commence,' (for, be it remembered, the Holy Ghost was not yet given, John vii. 39; the dispensation of the third person had not yet begun, and to this, no doubt, the special sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost must be understood to be limited)—'persevere, then,' as the Lord would seem to say, 'thus to reject God and his grace under *that*, the last dispensation, and forgiveness is impossible, you cut yourselves off from hope of mercy, and bring upon yourselves swift and irremediable ruin!' Such I take to be the real application and intent of that solemn warning, as primarily addressed to Israel, or Israel's representatives in the Scribes and Pharisees of our Lord's day. It was delivered in view of the future, and of the peril and condemnation which the future would entail, unless a total change in principle and conduct passed upon them. And what did follow the admonition? What its result in reference to Israel? What was their principle and conduct in after days—the days of the dispensation, to which the Lord here alludes? Precisely the same as in the days before; their actings towards God the Holy Ghost, varied not one jot from their actings towards God the Son. After

the ascension, and the outpouring of the Spirit, and the commencement of the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, Israel was still, as heretofore, the special object of Divine care and kindness; still was her interest the prime consideration with Christ himself; still was the Gospel to be first of all proclaimed to her. "Repentance and remission of sins should be preached, it is said, in Christ's name, among all nations, but beginning at Jerusalem," (Luke xxiv. 47;) and so it was; long did Jerusalem and its people at least attach to themselves, and almost exclusively, the sympathies and labours of the Apostles; with difficulty, and scarcely, at last, did they learn that the middle wall of partition was broken down; that the "Gentiles were to be fellow-heirs, and partakers of grace" with Israel; and that to them also, as well as to Israel, was the Gospel of grace to be freely offered. Slowly, I say, did the Apostles receive this, while gladly enough did they first adhere to the rule of preference in favour of Israel. And what, again I ask, was the result? What return, on Israel's part, for such marvellous continuance of undeserved favour? Remember this was the dispensation of the Holy Ghost, and the Apostles were the agents and instruments through which the blessings of that dispensation were to be proffered to Israel—and what was the result? What? Let Stephen tell us. We have already heard—let us hear again. "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so *do* ye." This was the result; here it is in one word, they resisted—they *resisted* the Holy Ghost!

As they rejected the Son, so they rejected the Holy Ghost; and the Holy Ghost, too, mark it well! in this, His own, His peculiar dispensation!

They thus, as we believe, did commit the unpardonable sin; they thus shut out eternal life from themselves; they thus by their own act and deed adjudged themselves unworthy of it. (Acts xiii. 46.) They affixed to themselves the broad stamp of self-inflicted reprobation, and evoked and riveted on themselves God's most terrible judgment; they then "filled up the measure of their iniquity"—*then*, I say, not before. The Lord had said, "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers," (Matt. xxiii. 32,) not ye *have* filled up, as though it were then done, but, "fill ye up!" A fearful prediction! A judicial righteous sentence in view of their future and determined rejection of God in the last dispensation, "Fill ye up!" And they did so! This was the climax of guilt, the consummation of their sin; beyond this they could not go, and up to this before they had never come. But now it was done; the measure was filled; no more room for sin, and no more waiting, therefore, for judgment. The "days of vengeance" then began — days foretold by Moses and the prophets, as well as by the Lord himself. "The LORD," saith Moses, "shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end of the earth, *as swift* as the eagle flieth; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old, nor shew favour to the young: and he shall eat the fruit of thy cattle, and the fruit of thy land, until thou be

destroyed: which *also* shall not leave thee *either* corn, wine, or oil, *or* the increase of thy kine, or flocks of thy sheep, until he have destroyed thee. And he shall besiege thee in all thy gates, until thy high and fenced walls come down, wherein thou trustedst, throughout all thy land: and he shall besiege thee in all thy gates throughout all thy land, which the LORD thy God hath given thee. And thou shalt eat the fruit of thine own body, the flesh of thy sons and of thy daughters, which the LORD thy God hath given thee, in the siege, and in the straitness, wherewith thine enemies shall distress thee: . . . . And the LORD shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and there thou shalt serve other gods, which neither thou nor thy fathers have known, *even* wood and stone. And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the LORD shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind." (Deut. xxviii. 49, &c.) Again, after the terrible denunciation found in Isaiah vi. 9, 10, already quoted, the prophet asks, say, "Lord, how long?" That is, how long shall the blindness last? The reply is —and deeply affecting is the prospect of Israel's destitution and wretchedness predicted therein, as their portion during this period — "Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the LORD have removed men far away, and *there be* a great forsaking in the midst of the land." Here the consequences of their blindness are as plainly predicted

as the blindness itself, and revealed, too, in immediate connection with it. Again, how emphatically does God's word in Hosea describe these days; after charging on Israel her sin — spiritual adultery, in the rejection of the Lord — the consequences are thus declared: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim." (Hosea iii. 4.) And lastly, Jesus himself predicting the siege and desolation of Jerusalem, with all their terrible accompaniments, adds as decisive of their nature and object, "For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled." (Luke xxi. 22.)

And then those days began; morally, when they had filled up the measure of their fathers, by the rejection of the Holy Ghost; physically, when Jerusalem was encompassed with armies and besieged. And still do those days endure. Eighteen centuries of sorrow and degradation, dispersion and distress have not exhausted them; the end is not come, nor is it to come except in a consummation of woe yet unprecedented even in Israel's history. The days of vengeance shall close in trouble, such as never was since the beginning of the world to that day, nor ever shall be; yea, trouble so intense, so destructive, that except it were shortened—which it shall be for the elects' sake, "no flesh should be saved."

What solemn, what salutary lessons are read to us in Israel's history, even thus far! What convincing proof of the truth, and fulfilment of God's word!

Here are predictions, delivered ages ago, receiving their literal accomplishment before our eyes; the facts are clear, and cannot be gainsayed. Israel's state, as it now exists, is nothing else but the fulfilment of prophecy. Israel's history—a monument set up on high, bearing the inscription, "GOD IS TRUE!" and challenging the world to deny it—brands infidelity with profoundest ignorance, as well as impiety. "There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down;" "they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled;" thus spake the Lord, eighteen centuries back, of Jerusalem, its temple, and its people. Measure the prediction by its accomplishment, and tell us, O infidel, where has it failed? Tell us further, O infidel, is the Scripture, therefore, God's word, or is it not? Yea, and tell us further still, will that word, in all its terrible denunciation on unbelief, and impenitence, and worldliness, be yet fulfilled or not? The Lord give thee understanding in all things, and teach thee to know, what Israel knew not, "The things that belong to thy peace," before they shall be for ever "hid from thine eyes."

The blindness of Israel, lamentable as it is in itself, and terrible as it is in its results, is nevertheless limited, both as to the number who are the subjects of it, and the period of its duration. We proceed to consider—

II. ITS LIMITATION.

"Blindness in part is happened unto Israel." Blindness in part,—that is, blindness to a part. It is not partial blindness to all, but complete blindness to some. The term "part" has reference not to blindness, but to Israel. It is complete in the case of those who are affected by it, as verses 7, 8, 9, 10, in the chapter from which my text is taken, prove. "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (according as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear) unto this day. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumbling-block, and a recompence unto them: let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway." But complete as it evidently is, in the case of those to whom it refers, it does not refer to all. Some there are among Israel who are not blinded at all; as is also apparent from the first five verses of the same chapter, wherein the Apostle adduces the case of Israel in the days of Elias, and argues that, as then, amidst all its abandonment and evil, seven thousand were reserved free from idolatry, so, even at "this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace," which election obtain salvation, and are not blinded. But further, in the case of those who are blinded, the evil is not permanent; it endures only for a season, "until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

Thus, then, Israel is presented to our notice di-

vided into two classes; and to distinguish clearly between these classes is of great moment; the right understanding of the whole Jewish question is involved in it. The classes are these:—First, a part blinded completely, but only for a season. Secondly, a part not blinded at all, not even for a season. The blinded part, as we see, comprises the nation at large; the part not blinded consists of the remnant according to the "election of grace." To these parts, respectively, we now direct our attention:—

1. The blinded part,—the nation at large, as distinct from the remnant according to the election of grace.

Now, while this is the only part blinded, the blindness is only for a season; a limit is imposed to it. As yet, indeed, it continues the same in character and effect as when, through its fatal influence, Israel rejected Jesus, blasphemed the Holy Ghost, and so, by the righteous judgment of God, brought on themselves their present desolation. But it will terminate; it extends not beyond an appointed time; "the vail will yet be taken away;" Israel will see, and "turn to the Lord."

This, indeed, or something akin to it, would seem highly probable in the nature of the case, or from the acknowledged peculiarity of their past and present condition, quite apart from direct Scripture testimony on the subject. Their preservation as a people, distinct from all other peoples on the face of the earth; intermingled with all, yet confounded with none; wandering everywhere, yet lost nowhere; trafficking in every clime and land, associating with every grade

and class of the family of man, yet universally separate, unmistakably isolated—in sympathy and habit, in dialect and demeanour—from all the rest. Wherefore is this? Wherefore this marvellous peculiarity —this unaccountable preservation and separation? Wherefore is Israel an exception in the history of all nations and peoples since the world began? Why is it, I ask, that while others, greater and mightier far, humanly speaking, have passed away, and sunk as it were in the ocean of bygone ages so that no vestige remains, she yet survives floating on the surface; not only existing, but actually retaining too, up to the present moment, all her distinctive peculiarities and antiquated characteristics? Where are now the once-mighty kingdoms of Babylon and Persia, of Greece and Rome? Where the descendants of those illustrious dynasties? Who can tell them, or point them out? Who analyse the mass of the existing family of man, and classify their descendants, separating them one from another, and arranging them respectively according to the particular kingdoms whence they sprang? Yet look at Israel, no such impossibility, no such difficulty here; as separate, and as separable now, as in the days of their wanderings in the wilderness or establishment in Canaan; the mark is ineffaceable, a part of their being: it remains while they remain, and accompanies them whithersoever they go. Travel where you will the wide world over, and the wide world over you not only find descendants of Abraham, but you know them to be so! An Israelite cannot be mistaken for another, nor can another be mistaken for him.

Why is this? What the natural inference but that the God, whose providence arranges and retains the distinction, has some great end yet to be answered thereby? And what so likely, even as a human probability, to be that end, as their final regathering to the land of their fathers; and that their present distinction, which consists in surviving all nations, should ripen into the future distinction of being first of all nations—what so likely as this, even as a human probability? But we are not left to human probabilities or human conjectures about it; the end is plainly and positively revealed; Israel is kept for this, and her present distinction shall ripen into this. She is to be regathered and to be first of nations on earth, as we shall see in future lectures; and to this very end, and in order to this, a limit is imposed to her present blinded, and deplorable state. Blindness is happened to her only until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in; this being accomplished, her blindness ceases: "All Israel shall be saved," as it is written, "There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

It is, however, with the *fact* of the limit to her blindness, and not with the results, that we have now to do. The point before us is merely that the blindness terminates at a certain time, and that time is specified in our text as the time when "the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

"The fulness of the Gentiles" must not be understood to mean *all the Gentiles*, or *the Gentiles in full;* for that, as Paul argues in this very chapter, verse 15,

will be consequent on, and not prior to, the recovery of Israel; but the full number of the *elect* among the Gentiles, the fulness of Christ's Church and body, as taken out from among the Gentiles—this is the meaning of the expression; and this is the object, and simply the object, of the present dispensation, in regard to the Gentiles; it contemplates nothing beyond this; as we learn from Acts xv. 14, "Simeon hath declared how God at the first did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name." And from the whole of our Lord's teaching, especially in the parables, we certainly gather the same; that the object of the Gospel in this age is not at all to convert the world, but to call out the elect, and bring to Him all, out of the world, whom the "Father hath given Him." And when this shall be done and the number of the elect accomplished, then the times of the Gentiles, and of their gracious invitation by God, cease: and with this also ceases the period of Israel's blindness; then the vail will be removed, she will see the light, and will herself "arise and shine."

The limit to Israel's blindness is expressed in Isaiah vi. 11, a passage already adverted to, but worthy of notice here again before we pass on. After the remarkable and terrible commission given by God to the Prophet, in verses 9, 10, imposing judicial blindness on Israel, in consequence of their sin, the Prophet asks, "Lord, how long?"—how long shall the blindness and hardness continue? The reply is, "Until the cities be wasted without inhabitants, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and

there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land;" that is, until the consumption determined on, in regard to the land and the people, be accomplished; until God's purpose in their punishment be thoroughly effected; and then, as verse 13 expresses, they "shall return;" their blindness and hardness shall be removed, and spiritual perception and penitence of heart be granted instead. And also observe, the limitation—if not of the blindness, yet of the desolation of Israel—is plainly declared by our Lord, in Luke xxi. 24, "Jerusalem shall be trodden under foot of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." But when those times shall be fulfilled, then, of course, as a necessary inference, Jerusalem shall no longer be trodden down by the Gentiles, but shall return to her lawful proprietors. Jerusalem shall arise from the dust, and Israel shall dwell in the holy city.

That the blindness of Israel, then, with all its terrible results, is only for a period, and that that period is commensurate with the "times of the Gentiles," is clearly determined. When the "fulness of the Gentiles" shall come in, Israel's blindness ends, and ends for ever.

But there is a part of Israel not blinded at all, not even for a season; we must notice that.

2. The part not blinded at all. The "remnant according to the election of grace." "Even so at this time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." This remnant consists of those individuals among all Israel whom God has chosen to believe unto eternal life. And amidst outcast, despised, suffering Israel this remnant exists, and is

continually being gathered according to the purpose, and by the effectual calling of Almighty God. It was so in Christ's days, as well as the apostles'; though rejected, as He was by the nation at large, individuals were found who gladly received Him; yea, a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith. This remnant, together with the elect among the Gentiles, constitute the Church of Christ, the bride, the Lamb's wife. And here it is where the distinction between Jew and Gentile is utterly lost. "Both are one in Christ;" and all former distinctions are merged in that which is common. "There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond *nor* free: but Christ *is* all, and in all." (Col. iii. 11.)

The distinction now existing, and, as we believe, hereafter for ever to exist, between Israel and the Gentiles, relates purely to the "nation," and is totally unconnected with "the remnant according to the election of grace" and the Church of Christ. It is from misapprehension of this, or confounding the "*nation*" with the "*remnant*," that the subject of Israel's prospects becomes, of necessity, embarrassed with hopeless perplexity. Thus, for instance, it is said, 'In Christ all are one, how then can Israel hereafter be first of all?' Observe the above distinction, and the reply is simple. Israel's predicted supremacy relates exclusively to the "*nation*," and not to the "*remnant;*" to the state of the former on the earth, and not of the latter in the church. Or, again, it is said, 'Israel is to be first of all, how then can all be one in Christ?' On the above principle the reply

here is also simple. The "oneness" relates exclusively to the "*remnant*," and not to the "*nation*;" to the state of the former in the church, and not of the latter on the earth. All that is requisite is to preserve this important distinction. Let the *nation* and the *remnant* be viewed apart, and its proper place assigned to each, and no difficulty whatever will attach to the prospects of Israel.

This distinction, let it be remembered too, is no imaginary distinction, or even mere matter of prophecy, to be realised only in ages to come; it is matter of fact now, palpable as the existence of Israel itself. The "*remnant* according to the election of grace" is, as we see, daily separating itself in the case of all its believing members, from the "nation;" and thus, incorporating itself with the church, it becomes "one in Christ," one with the rest of his mystical body. The "*nation*," on the other hand, as we see, constantly retains its separate and isolated character; anathematizes the remnant as it quits her, disclaims all further alliance or relationship with it; and despite of all anger from God, or reproach from man, stands before the world as Israel still, in all her original and distinctive peculiarity! And thus, substantially, will it be hereafter; the same principle of distinction will for ever prevail. The remnant will for ever be thus incorporated, for ever thus "one in Christ" with the rest of believers: no difference, no distinction, whatever will prevail between them in final glory. The "nation" will for ever remain separate, not only from the remnant above in glory, but from the nations be-

low, unconfounded with any, but first of all on the face of the earth. This, however, will be still more clearly apparent when we come, in future lectures, to consider the "age to come," or the millennial age; we shall then see the "*remnant*" constituting a part of the church in glory, quite inseparable and undistinguishable from the rest, reigning with Christ over the earth; while we shall also see the "*nation*," as first of nations in the flesh, utterly separate and distinguished from the rest, enjoying supremacy on the earth. The distinction between the "remnant" and the "nation" will then be seen in its real character and important results.

To this glorious issue, as it relates to the church and the earth, I would now merely observe, the present dispensation is preparatory, and subservient. As the church in glory is to be composed of Jews and Gentiles alike, so the Gospel is now calling out the elect of both, in order to the church's final completion. And as the earth is in its future regenerate state to be occupied by nations of which Israel shall be first, and manifestly supreme, so God is marvellously preserving her, amidst all her desolations and wanderings, separate from others, in order to her readiness, at a moment's notice, to take the high position destined for her. Oh! how wonderful are God's works! How fitted for the accomplishment of his purposes! How evident the progress towards the end! How sure the end! "I will work, saith the Lord, and who shall let it?"

It is worthy of notice here, that vast as is the difference, in some respects, between God's dealings with

Israel and the Gentiles, yet in all momentous particulars—particulars relating to eternity—his dealings are the same. Out of both he calls an elect remnant for the formation of the church: out of both he spares a national residue to occupy the regenerated earth. In the former case, Jew and Gentile are both alike, and shall be so for ever; in the latter, though Israel shall be first of all, yet all, like Israel, shall be blessed with the knowledge of the glory of God, walking in the light of the New Jerusalem, and bringing their honour and glory into it.

But now, before we close the lecture, let us recall to mind the definite point and subject it is intended to elucidate, and that is—*Israel's present state!* "Blindness in part is happened unto Israel." This is her state. She is blinded in part—the nation is blinded; and we see it in her continued national rejection of Christ. The "remnant according to the election of grace" is not blinded, and we see it in the frequent conversion of individuals out of the nation to Christ. The blindness of the former, however, is not permanent, but will continue only until the number of the elect, in the latter, together with the fulness of the Gentiles, shall be brought into the church, and then the blindness will pass away. The nation will then receive the Saviour, and "so all Israel will be saved." The first step towards this blessed change in her prospective history will form the subject of the next lecture; for the present, we conclude with the following inferences:—

1. The knowledge of Israel's present and prospective state is essential to prevent self-conceit, or the

"being wise in our own conceits,"—puffed up with notions of our Gentile superiority. This knowledge teaches that we are not a whit better than they; nor our prospects a whit brighter than theirs. What, though Israel as a nation be cast off and cast down, dispersed, trampled on, despised; still, despite her present degradation, she shall be first of nations in the regenerated earth, and all shall bow down to her and serve her! And what, though it be said, "But when she is first of nations, we who believe shall be the bride, and reign with Christ over that earth to which her supremacy shall be exclusively limited!" Still, I reply, we reign not over it to the exclusion of all Israel; the "remnant" shall be with us, united alike with ourselves to Jesus, seated alike with him on the throne, reigning alike over the regenerated earth. Where then our superiority — where our ground of boasting here? Or again, regarding our present state, where is the difference between us? Touching the election, all are alike—*the elect*, whether Jew or Gentile, are all one in Christ! Touching the *rest*, whether Jew or Gentile, where is the difference? — Israel, it is true, avowedly rejects the Saviour; Christendom, it is true, avowedly receives the Saviour, but both in works deny Him! The unbelieving Jew and the unconverted Gentile alike live without God in the world, and alike dishonour his name and break his law — Where then is the difference, or what to choose between them? Alas! both alike must repent, or both alike must perish. This is the history and truth of the matter; and nothing but ignorance, most profound, of Israel or

Christendom, of Israel's prospects, or Christendom's sin, can now give rise to Gentile boasting, or account for Gentile pride.

Ah! let us beware of this, and profit by the admonition ministered in the text. Let us avail ourselves of the light God has thrown on "the mystery," and seek to be wise concerning Israel, that we may escape being "wise in our own conceits." It would be no small aggravation of the evil against which we are warned, should the ignorance which engenders it result from indifference to the subject revealed for our information, or, still worse, prejudice against it. I say, take heed of this; on no account remain ignorant of the mystery here revealed; study Israel's history well; study it carefully, as revealed in Scripture; it will be a safeguard against pride, and a vast help to the attainment of humility: and, if no more than this accrued from it, the time spent in the investigation is not vain, nor the gain deduced from it to be lightly accounted of. When some asked, "Who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" Jesus replied, "Whosoever shall humble himself, even as a little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

2. But there is an opposite extreme, to avoid which the knowledge in our text is essential—even to prevent, not the *contempt*, but the *superstitious veneration* of Israel. The tendency of man's mind is ever to extremes. Despise and contemn Israel, or unduly exalt and venerate Israel: this is the tendency of the human mind, and not unfrequently the fact of human experience. People there are who literally would stoop to the most humiliating offices for a Jew's

sake; not, observe, for a fellow-creature's sake, or a believer's sake, not for the sake of common humanity, or the sake of common Christianity, but for the Jew's sake, as a *Jew*—an unbelieving, Christ-rejecting Jew! Now the knowledge in my text seems at once to expose and utterly dissipate such a delusion: it sets the Jew or Israelite before us precisely in the just point of view. And what is he at last, or at best? He can only be one of the elect; and so are we, who believe, of the Gentiles! As to what remains to the rest, their predicted national supremacy at a future day, that sinks into absolute nothingness in comparison with the elects' elevation and glory; and, till that day, what is an Israelite, or Jew, as such? What but a miserable unbeliever, a fearful rejecter of the Lord of life, a despiser of the grace which Christ purchased with His own blood—calling, indeed, as he loudly does, for our pity and help, but less than any on earth for our veneration or our respect! No! let us rightly distinguish in the matter of Israel; let us be instructed concerning them in their various classes. Israel, *as individual unbelievers*, we regard with pity, but without the shadow of veneration or respect. Israel, as *the nation* yet to be restored, and so beloved for the fathers' sakes, we regard with intense interest, and earnest longings for the fulfilment of their destiny. Israel, *as touching the remnant* within her, and daily coming forth of her, we regard with all of brotherly love, as members incorporated in the mystical body of Christ, fellow-heirs with ourselves of the inheritance in glory. Such is the view we take of Israel, and for this we are indebted, in no small measure, to the com-

prehensive though concise information given in the text.

3. Lastly, this knowledge is necessary to direct our efforts concerning Israel.

Israel as a nation is to be converted when the Lord shall come. "The Redeemer shall come out of Zion, and turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and so all Israel shall be saved." With the nation, therefore, our efforts have nothing to do. Their conversion is the Lord's own work, and He will do it. It is the "remnant," therefore, which is to be gathered generation after generation, in the age in which we live, as well as all other ages, which is to engage our practical attention, and to which our labours of love are specially to be directed. We are to endeavour to bring out the remnant, or to turn to the Lord the individuals, whosoever they may be, that compose it. This is to be done in their case, as in the case of others, by the proclamation unto them of the Gospel of Christ. The duty, then, in regard to Israel is plain enough; and, let me add, the obligation to its discharge is pressing enough. The demand of Israel on Gentile Christians is by no means light. It is assuredly no common call she makes on our sympathy, no ordinary appeal she prefers to our mercy. To Israel, instrumentally, are we indebted for the "oracles of God"—to her were they "committed," and she was their keeper, their safe-keeper, age after age, till they reached even unto us. To Israel, instrumentally, are we indebted even for the Saviour himself—for "of Israel, concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever." And surely, then, if the truths of those oracles

and the worth of that Saviour have, by the grace of God, been revealed unto us, the least we can render back to Israel for the favour is, like Paul of old, to reason with her "out of those oracles," "opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead, and that this Jesus whom we preach is Christ;" that thus, the Lord being merciful unto them, some may believe and become partakers of eternal life. Nay, is it not in order to this very effort on our part that *they* are left in unbelief, and *we* have "received mercy?" Observe the Apostle's argument, verse 31: "Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they may obtain mercy." Their case, evidently, is intended as a special opportunity and occasion for the exercise of our mercy —and our mercy received from God is intended as a special talent and gift to be thus employed for their benefit. As, then, we would hearken to the voice and be guided by the word of the Spirit; as we would be faithful to our trust, and rightly use the gift of God; yea, as we would also believe God, concerning his purpose in the permission of their unbelieving state, so must we seek to remove that unbelief, and show mercy to them by proclaiming to them the mercy of God! Oh! we must stir up ourselves to this; we must be earnest and diligent in this work; to this end, as far as Israel is concerned, "we must labour, warning them and teaching them in all wisdom," that "if by any means we may save some." In so doing, at least we take God's rule as our rule of action, and attempt that which, on scriptural ground, falls within the compass of human instrumentality, even the salvation of "the

remnant according to the election of grace;" while in so doing, also, we best consult the final and full prosperity of the whole; for in helping to accomplish the number of the elect we hasten the kingdom; and when the King shall come, he shall "turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and all Israel shall be saved."

LECTURE II.

ISRAEL'S RESTORATION IN PART.

"THEREFORE THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD; BECAUSE YE ARE ALL BECOME DROSS, BEHOLD, THEREFORE I WILL GATHER YOU INTO THE MIDST OF JERUSALEM.

"*AS* THEY GATHER SILVER, AND BRASS, AND IRON, AND LEAD, AND TIN, INTO THE MIDST OF A FURNACE, TO BLOW THE FIRE UPON IT, TO MELT *IT;* SO WILL I GATHER *YOU* IN MINE ANGER AND IN MY FURY, AND I WILL LEAVE *YOU THERE*, AND MELT YOU.

"YEA, I WILL GATHER YOU, AND BLOW UPON YOU IN THE FIRE OF MY WRATH, AND YE SHALL BE MELTED IN THE MIDST THEREOF.

"AS SILVER IS MELTED IN THE MIDST OF THE FURNACE, SO SHALL YE BE MELTED IN THE MIDST THEREOF; AND YE SHALL KNOW THAT I THE LORD HAVE POURED OUT MY FURY UPON YOU."—Ezekiel xxii. 19, 20, 21, 22.

WE enter on the consideration of Israel's prospective history, as exhibited in the prophecies of God's word. In the last lecture, her present state was examined and explained; and we saw, according to Scripture

testimony, abundantly confirmed by fact, that she is nationally blinded; and, consequently, rejecting the Messiah, is by the righteous judgment of God, "scattered and peeled, meted out and trodden down, among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other;" while at the same time, a "remnant according to the election of grace" is being called out of her; which together with the elect among the Gentiles constitutes the true church, the mystical body of the Lord Jesus Christ. The blinded part, however, we saw, was not permanently to abide in blindness; a limit is imposed to this lamentable condition; it lasts only "till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in;" then "the vail will be taken away," the Deliverer will come out of Zion, the light shall arise upon her. her darkness shall be dispelled, and "all Israel shall be saved."

But this salvation is yet future. It belongs to and involves, exclusively, Israel's prospective history; it is the great subject of investigation with which we have now to do, forming the staple of our present lectures; and, interesting as it is in itself, will moreover be found to embrace in its consideration almost all other leading topics of interest included in Scripture history of "things to come." For Israel's history is bound up with that of the world at large; and her recovery is, as already intimated, essentially connected with "the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken of by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

Israel's recovery, then, as predicted in her prospective history, is our subject. What, we ask, is the

first glimpse of that recovery, as foreseen in that history? What will be her first step towards her final exaltation? What will mark and constitute, actually, the commencement of her change? As yet, she abides in her misery; as yet, she is outcast, despised, dispersed: as yet, no sign, no indication, or, at least, no actual movement in the direction of her recovery, is apparent. Jerusalem is even now trodden under foot of the Gentiles: and Israel, even now, "abiding," as heretofore, "for many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim." Such is even now her condition; so we behold it with our eyes. What then are we to look for as the beginning of the change—the turning point in her history? What to anticipate and desire as proof in part that "the time to favour Zion, yea, the set time is," if not fully "come," yet near at hand? I reply, without hesitation—*A partial restoration to the land of Judea*; and, to the proof and illustration of this, as the main subject of the present lecture, I now proceed.

First, then, notice particularly, it is a *partial restoration* of which I speak—not full, and final, but partial, and initiatory: the first act in that which shall afterwards be completed: the beginning of that which shall subsequently be perfected.

That a restoration of Israel—a literal restoration to their own land—shall, at some time and in some way, come to pass, is, I believe, now almost universally admitted. Few in the present day attempt to explain away, and virtually nullify, the plain de-

clarations of God's word on this point. The inconsistency and, indeed, absurdity of adopting a literal interpretation of prophecies which foretell their blindness and dispersion; and maintaining a spiritual interpretation of those which *as plainly* foretell their conversion and restoration, is generally acknowledged, and as generally eschewed; so much so, indeed, that some there are who, though still clinging to the spiritual as the right principle of interpretation in reference to prophecy in general, readily abandon it as untenable in reference to Israel in particular. But though this is the case, and such unanimity may be said to prevail concerning the predictions of the *fact* of a literal restoration; yet it is no less true, that great discrepancy of opinion also prevails concerning most of the circumstances connected with that fact; for instance, as to the *time* of its accomplishment, whether before or after the advent; the *means* of its accomplishment, whether human or Divine, natural or supernatural; *the state of Israel* during its accomplishment, whether converted or unconverted. Great discrepancy prevails on these particulars, as well as some others; and, doubtless, until the fact shall be accomplished, and thus for ever and beyond question settle such points, discrepancy will not altogether cease, nor difficulties be altogether disposed of. Nevertheless, I cannot but think that so much light is thrown on the whole subject, and so much plain information given about it in God's word; that if men are really desirous of knowing the truth, and willing, by patient and prayerful investigation, to learn it, much at least of this doubt and difficulty will

be found to vanish, and safe and important conclusions be surely attained.

On this principle, then, these lectures are constructed; and on this principle I proceed at once—instead of discussing the various opinions, right or wrong, entertained by others — to state concisely what I believe the Bible teaches concerning the subject immediately before us, and then more fully to elucidate and confirm it by the same authority.

What I gather from the Bible is this,—That the next event and first great change in Israel's history will be *the restoration of a part of the nation to the land of Judea:* that this will therefore precede and be preparatory to all other events in her future history—such as the revelation and actings of "the man of sin," and the appearing of the "witnesses;" the gathering of the nations against Jerusalem, and the battle of Armaggedon; the advent of our Lord, and the destruction of Antichrist, with the confederate nations under him; that again, after all these momentous events, there will be *another restoration*, the completion, as it were, of the first, when "all Israel" then existing "shall be saved," and all predictions relating to their supremacy and glory shall receive their plenary accomplishment. Such, concisely, is the view the Bible presents to my own mind. I proceed to prove the correctness of that view, as it relates to the restoration of Israel in its incipient state, and then touch on some of the attendant circumstances of that restoration.

I. THE NEXT EVENT, AND FIRST CHANGE IN ISRAEL'S HISTORY, WILL BE A PARTIAL RESTORATION.

It needs but little acquaintance with Scripture to be assured that a restoration, *in some sense,* whether partial or complete, shall be the next event in Israel's history; for in numerous passages where her dispersion is announced, her restoration is predicted as immediately connected with its close; and *that,* too, without the slightest intimation of any other event of moment as intended to precede it. Her dispersion goes on as from the beginning, unchanged in character, until the restoration; *then* and therein it ends, and ends for ever. Thus, in Ezekiel xxxvii. 21, "Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land." Again, in Hosea iii. 4, 5, the same truth, only more explicitly revealed; after the description of their state during their dispersion in the fourth verse, it is added, "Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their GOD, and David their king." "*Afterward,*" observe, "they shall return." So this is the change in their history: their destitute and deplorable case, as exhibited in verse the fourth—which, I repeat, is just the history of their state during their dispersion—gives way only to this *return;* till it occurs, their state remains unaltered, but in this it changes, and in this it ends. The same is taught by our Lord, in Luke xxi. 24—"They shall be led away captive into all nations;

and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled." Then, of course, when the times of the Gentiles shall be fulfilled, Israel will cease to be thus captive in all nations, and Jerusalem cease to be trodden under foot of the Gentiles; but as their captivity and dispersion last till that, so *that* is the next event to occur in their history. Besides, we must observe that all the predictions relative to Israel in the latter day relate to her as a nation,—a nation embodied and regathered to the land of Judea; and so till that gathering be accomplished, none of those predictions can be fulfilled, or the events to which they point be brought to pass. It is quite clear, then, that a restoration, in some sense, is the next event to be looked for in Israel's history.

Now this restoration will, in the first instance, be partial—a prelude to another which shall afterwards be perfect; so that, in fact, there are to be two restorations—*one* to take place before the advent, introductory to all other events in Israel's history; *the other* to take place after the advent, introductory to Israel's final establishment on the regenerated earth. In proof of these two distinct restorations, I observe—

First, That one must take place *before* the advent, is certain, because we are expressly told by the word of the Lord, that all nations are to be gathered together in battle against Jerusalem, and actually to besiege the city, *before* the Lord shall come. The following passage establishes this point beyond question:—"Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For

I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken. . . . . Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives." Here the siege is declared distinctly *before* the advent, and Jerusalem, therefore, must be inhabited, and a restoration, therefore, have taken place *before* that event.

Secondly, That another restoration shall come to pass *after* the advent, seems equally certain from the following passages: "And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea. And he shall set up an ensign for the nations, and shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather together the dispersed of Judah, from the four corners of the earth. . . . . And the Lord shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make *men* go over dry shod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt." (Isa. xi. 11, 12, 15, 16.) Again, "It shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the out-

casts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord, in the holy mount at Jerusalem." (Isa. xxvii. 13.) Again, "Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side." (Isa. lx. 4.) Once more, "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, *to* Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, *to* Tubal and Javan, *to* the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren *for* an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord." (Isa. lxvi. 19, 20.) Now in these passages, severally, a restoration is declared as occurring:—in the *first*, (Isa. xi.) after the destruction of "the wicked one," verse 5, which we know, from 2 Thess. ii. 8, is accomplished by the advent; in the *second*, (Isa. xxvii.) after the Lord has come out of his place to punish the earth, chap. xxvi. 10, 21, which is also at the advent; in the *third*, (Isa. lx. 4,) after the light of Israel is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon her, which is also at and by the advent; and in the *fourth*, (Isa. lxvi.) after the LORD has been pleading with all flesh by fire and by the sword, nay, after He has actually "come with fire," verses, 15, 16, which is, without doubt, the advent also. So it is quite clear that another restoration does take place *after* the advent.

Let it be observed, also, that in some of the above passages, and in various others that might be quoted, it appears that the Gentiles themselves shall be instrumental in accomplishing this restoration. Now, previous to the advent, the Gentiles entertain no friendly feeling towards Israel; on the contrary, as far as they are concerned about her, they are utterly hostile to her interests, and gather themselves together to assault and besiege her; but *then* they actually serve her, and minister to her exaltation and recovery, "bringing her sons from far," and her "brethren as an offering unto the Lord." This change in the mind of the Gentiles is the consequence of their own conversion, and the fruit therefore of the advent, (Isa. lxvi. 19, 20;) nor is it ever represented or supposed to exist prior to that event.

The evidence is conclusive, then, in favour of two distinct restorations; one *partial*, the other *complete;* one *before* the advent, the other *after;* one followed by *the hostility of all nations against Israel*, the other effected instrumentally *by the aid of all nations in favour of Israel.* We are thus far prepared to give our attention to these restorations in order. Let us notice some of the leading features in the first; the second will be considered in a future lecture. The following are among the most interesting subjects of inquiry connected with the first restoration:—

1. The time of its arrival, or when will it occur?

None can tell. The Lord says, "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." (Matt. xxiv. 14.) And as this restoration

—the *first* restoration—is evidently to be itself the beginning of "the end," the first in the series of events which shall run through that momentous period; so when the Gospel shall have been preached (or nearly so) among all nations, then, as we judge, will this restoration begin. Beyond this we venture to surmise nothing as to the time; nor indeed shall we be able to surmise, with any degree of certainty at least, when the Gospel shall have been so preached; for since it is to be preached only as a *witness*, and not for the conversion of the nations, the result will not be demonstrative of the work being done; and so the time "of the end," or the beginning of "the end," will, of necessity—till it opens upon us in the restoration itself—be hidden from the scrutiny and perception of all but God himself.

2. The extent of this Restoration, or the number to be restored.

I believe the number will be very great. The investigation of the subject leads me to this conclusion. In Ezekiel, where the assault on Israel by the antichrist and his host is described, the following passage occurs: "Thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates, to take a spoil, and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places *that are now* inhabited, and upon the people *that are* gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land." (Ezek. xxxviii. 11, 12.) Here, then, Israel the first restored, are

described as occupying a vast extent of country, and unwalled villages, and possessing much property, all implying a great concourse, and multitude in the land. From the language of our text it would seem also that the gathering was great, the number restored very considerable. And what, perhaps, is more conclusive still, since "all nations" are said to be gathered together against Israel at this time, it is evident that the number in the land must be great, or wherefore such a host assembled to assault and despoil them?

Whatever, then, may be the comparative number of the first and last restoration; or however the latter may in this matter exceed the former, still in itself the first restoration must be very extensive. Events of tremendous import and unprecedented magnitude follow on it—it is actually preparatory and in order to them—and a number of Israel proportionate to such events, will doubtless be gathered to the scene of action.

3. The means through which this Restoration shall be effected—natural or supernatural, ordinary or miraculous?

Probably the former; we have no intimation in Scripture of extraordinary interposition in reference to it; (the passages declaring miraculous agency, Isaiah xi. 15, 16; xvii. 13, refer to the last restoration, hereafter to be noticed;) nor is it likely that anything of the kind should occur. Indeed, considering the immediate object of this restoration, we should expect the absence of any occurrence, that might serve to awaken or arrest general attention;

to startle or disturb the world at large. The immediate object is just to repeople the land, to bring into Judea a certain part of Israel. It is *after* this that startling events are to transpire, and startling truly they will be! But till this shall be effected, "peace and safety" is to be the general feeling and general cry! The world at rest; Christendom slumbering—Peace and Safety!—and nothing must disturb it. Let Israel be gathered gently, and without observation; let no man note it, and no man scarcely know it as a predicted event; let it pass on, and pass by, for the moment, as an ordinary affair, a political movement. It will seem good in the sight of all nations peradventure that so it should be; Judea will be parcelled out of the world's map, by common consent, for the occupation of its ancient possessors! It will be deemed politically safe that this important post between Europe and Asia, be occupied by an independent and neutral people. Who so good as Israel? *Leave*, therefore, *leave* of man will be granted for Israel to have and to hold what God proclaims their own for ever; while their ancient title deeds and prescriptive right may be felt, probably, to have some weight in determining its concession to them! But we know not; God knows, and God will settle the matter when the set time comes; though, even humanly speaking, when we see such changes as are transpiring around us on every side, what more likely than such a change as this restoration will involve? The conviction of its expediency, and the stroke of a pen, on the part of one or two of the leading continental powers, and the deed would be done.

4. The moral and religious state in which this part of Israel will be restored—in a converted, or unconverted state?

Unconverted without doubt. Israel thus restored will be restored in unbelief. It is when they are in the land, Jerusalem rebuilt and inhabited, and after a time of surpassing tribulation, and not till then, that repentance is given unto them. The prophet Zechariah is conclusive on this point: "In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David *shall be* as God, as the angel of the LORD before them. And it shall come to pass in that day, *that* I will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for *his* only *son*, and shall be in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for *his* first-born." (Zech. xii. 8–10.) When the LORD defends Jerusalem and destroys its enemies, which is at the close of Israel's trouble—as will appear in a future lecture—then it is that He visits His people in mercy, and pours out the spirit of grace and repentance upon them. To the same effect Scripture testifies in Isaiah i. 24. After God has eased him of his adversaries—who, I believe, are the host hereafter to be gathered against Jerusalem—He says, He will turn his hand upon Jerusalem, and purely purge away her dross, and take away all her tin.

(Isa. i. 24, 25.) And, indeed, since Israel is gathered into Jerusalem as into a furnace, and for the express purpose of purification, it is certain that when gathered she must be morally fitted to undergo this process, and therefore must morally need it; her "dross" and "tin" must then be in her; she must of necessity be in an unconverted state. This will, however, appear further if we mark particularly,

5. The object for which Israel is thus gathered.

The ultimate object, no doubt, is her purification and conversion; but the primary object, and preparatory to the ultimate one, is her chastisement and suffering. During this first restoration there will occur what is emphatically declared to be, "*Jacob's trouble,*"—trouble such as never was, nor ever shall be again—the very climax of woe; the consummation of earthly tribulation! Terrible is the account given of it in Scripture. "And these are the words that the LORD spake concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day *is* great, so that none *is* like it; it *is* even the time of Jacob's trouble." (Jer. xxx. 4–7.) My text, too, is expressive of the same calamitous period. Also Daniel thus speaks of it: "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of my people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was

since there was a nation *even* to that time." (Chap. xii. 1.) And our Lord in Matthew, "For there shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be." (Chap. xxiv. 21.) All these passages refer to the same event the same terrible "trouble;" and it is to occur, as they all teach in themselves or their contexts, before the advent; and therefore during the period of this restoration.

It is then for this, the endurance of this, preparatory to the benefit resulting from it, that Israel is, in the first instance, to be gathered; it is that she may be cast into the furnace, heated some seven times hotter than ever it was heated before; it is that she may be submitted to this fearful process, this fiery ordeal; that God may shew her her sin, though afterwards He will shew her His grace. It is for *this* Israel shall first be gathered! Terrible, oh, most terrible recompence that awaits her, when she shall receive double for all her transgressions! Israel is to be saved, even with an everlasting salvation; the word of the LORD hath spoken it, and who shall annul it? But what the bitterness of heart! what the depths of anguish! what the ocean of tribulation, through which that salvation shall be vouchsafed unto her! Doubtless her salvation shall declare abundantly, and eternally, God's faithfulness and truth! No less abundantly shall her "tribulation" declare her own unfaithfulness and sin!

It may be well to notice here that this tribulation must not be confounded with another tribulation, or time of exceeding trouble to occur *after* the advent.

The distinction is of great importance—practically so even to ourselves. The church of Christ of which we who believe are members, will in a greater or less degree be exposed to the one already described, but entirely escape the other; she will be on earth during the former, but safe with her Lord in glory during the latter. This will be more fully explained in a future lecture, but I notice it here to prevent confusion and in order to insure, as far as possible, clear and definite views of the object of the first restoration.

Thus far, then, our way is made plain. The next event in Israel's history will be a partial restoration to the land of Judea; this restoration will be effected, as we believe, by human agency, and without much observation. The state of Israel then gathered will be a state of unbelief; and the object of the restoration, in reference to Israel, is signal chastisement, preparatory to her repentance and conversion. Let us now briefly consider,

II. The attendant circumstances of this Restoration.

Supposing Israel then to be partially restored, actually re-established, and dwelling in the land of Judea —the following, or some such inquiries, naturally suggest themselves:—

1. How long will this state of things last, or what period of time will elapse between the commencement of this restoration, and the advent of our Lord? For at the advent of our Lord a total change will (as we shall hereafter see) pass on this restored body, as well as on the land of Judea itself.

The period will probably be very short—a few years at most, we conceive. There seems no reason whatever for its prolongation beyond this, but many reasons for the contrary. Momentous are the events whereby it shall be characterised, yet they are not of a nature to demand any lengthened period for their accomplishment. Besides, as the object of this restoration is, primarily, Israel's purification by suffering, and that suffering to be the climax and winding-up of the already-protracted tribulation through which she shall have passed, the probability is that it will be short in proportion to its intensity—terrible beyond precedent, but therefore condensed into a small compass.

I would venture to suggest it as my own opinion, that this period will be found just commensurate, and indeed identical, with the last week of Daniel's "seventy weeks," foretold in the closing verses of the ninth chapter of his prophecies. The attentive reader will notice that the last week is distinctly and purposely cut off from the rest of the time; it stands by itself, and is itself marked by very peculiar circumstances.

The whole seventy weeks are divided into three periods; *seven weeks, threescore and two weeks*, and *one week*. The *seven weeks* and *threescore and two weeks* are connected together in themselves, and the events they embrace. Not so the *one week*: a long and indefinite interval is represented as elapsing between the close of the *threescore and two weeks* and the commencement of this *one week*. Observe the passage: "From the going forth of the com-

mandment to restore and build Jerusalem (after the Babylonish captivity) to Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself." Here end the *seven weeks,* and *threescore and two weeks,* each period involving its particular event; the *seven weeks,* or first period, elapsing between "the going forth of the commandment," and the rebuilding of the wall; the *threescore and two weeks,* or second period, elapsing between the wall being rebuilt and the Messiah being cut off; and then, what? Not the *last week,* or third period, no! but a prediction of a certain prince who shall come, (not Messiah the Prince, spoken of in verse 25, for He has already come and been cut off,) but one that shall come and destroy the city and sanctuary; "the end," it is added, "shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined." Then comes the prediction of the third period, or *last and separate week:* "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week; and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." This *last week,* then, is quite separate and distinct in itself, and its events, from the preceding sixty-nine: it is cut off from them, and a long interval elapses between them. But this week closes the prophecy, and with it also the history of

the present age, it is the end of this dispensation; and so far, therefore, it exactly agrees in *time* with the restoration, for this also is to be at the end of this dispensation.

But the agreement is closer still; for the events predicted to occur during this week, are precisely those which are predicted to occur during the restoration, and which necessarily require the restoration, or presence of Israel in Judea, for their accomplishment, such, for instance, as "the coming of the prince or antichrist, and his making a covenant with Israel; his breaking this covenant, and causing the sacrifice and oblation to cease, (which could only be in Jerusalem, and when Israel was there;) and the continuance of his desolating course, until that determined shall be poured upon him—the Desolator; that is, until he, the Desolator, shall be destroyed by the coming of Christ." These are the events predicted to occur during and at the close of the "week;" and these are the events, as we shall see in future lectures, which are to transpire, during and at the close of the first restoration; hence, I cannot but infer, from this exact agreement, both in time and circumstances, between "the week" and the first restoration, that they are identical, and that seven years, or thereabouts, will be the period which will elapse between the commencement of this restoration and the advent of the Lord.

2. What will be the occupations of Israel, thus restored?

The ordinary occupations of life, no doubt; but especially will they be engaged in rebuilding their

cities and villages, Jerusalem and its temple in particular. That these will be rebuilt is quite certain from the following predictions: "The city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof." (Jer. xxx. 18.) "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath . . . . . and it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever." (Jer. xxxi. 38—40.) "Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, *even* Jerusalem." (Zech. xii. 6.) "And it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and *from* the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. And *men* shall dwell in it, and there shall no more be utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited." (Zech. xiv. 10, 11.) As to the temple being rebuilt, let Ezekiel's prophecies suffice; in the last eight chapters, the most minute particulars of the temple, and its service and circumstances, are foreseen and predicted by the prophet, which, as they have never yet been realized, must remain, of necessity, to be so. Moreover the restoration of the temple is evident on this ground also—that, on its future existence, several predictions are necessarily dependent for their possible fulfilment. The "abomination of desolation" is therein to be set up; there, also, is antichrist to sit, in all his daring and blasphemous assumption, "shewing himself that

he is God!"—for, in a future lecture, I shall shew that neither one or other of these have as yet made their appearance in the temple of God. To this temple also Christ is yet to come, as Malachi testifies, "And the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of his covenant whom ye delight in; behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts;" (Mal. iii. 1;) for neither has this been yet fulfilled, as any who will consult the context to the passage will readily perceive. However the Lord visited the temple at His first advent, or during the days of His earthly ministry, yet none will surely argue that *then* He was "like a refiner's fire and like fuller's soap;" or that *then* He "sat as a refiner and purifier of silver, and did purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver," so that they offered unto the LORD an offering of righteousness; or that the offering of Judah and Jerusalem was pleasant unto the Lord in those days! Verily, instead of being purified by the Lord's visitation, they were enraged and exasperated beyond measure, they reviled, persecuted, and slew Him. And instead of being an offering pleasant unto the Lord in those days, he looked on them with righteous indignation, saying, "fill ye up the measure of your iniquities;" and subsequently destroyed them, their city, their temple, their polity, with a terrible, still-abiding and unexampled destruction! Oh! no, this prediction has not been fulfilled, but it will be; the days shall come when Christ will purify the sons of Levi, and when Judah and Israel shall be an offering even pleasant unto the Lord; but those days will be when "the

Redeemer shall come out of Zion and turn away ungodliness from Jacob;" and in those days, too, will He, as One whom Israel shall "delight in," "come to his temple."

The temple, then, as well as Jerusalem, and other cities and villages in Judea, will be rebuilt! and the erection of these will, with other ordinary pursuits, constitute, as we believe, the occupations of Israel at the commencement of the restoration. Towards the close of the period, the hostility of antichrist and the invasion of the land and siege of the city by the assembled nations will, as we shall see, abundantly engage their time and attention.

This leads me to notice—

3. The remarkable persons who may be expected to appear contemporaneously with the Restoration, and to play a prominent part in connection with Israel's history.

The particular history of these persons will be examined in our next lecture, and therefore the mere mention of them here will be sufficient. Antichrist, "the man of sin," "the son of perdition," "the wilful king," "the prince that is to come," alluded to in Daniel, will then appear; and it will be with Israel that he will be especially connected in his actings and his ruin. He will, in the first instance, be received and afterwards rejected by Israel; and will meet his destiny, and endless and apalling doom, at the advent of our Lord. This is he of whom Daniel and all the prophets speak much; whose history is concisely given by Paul in the Thessalonians, and also by John in the book of Revelation.

The witnesses also, predicted to arise in the latter days, in Rev. xi., at this time make their appearance on the stage of Judea. Their business will be, apparently, to testify for Christ against antichrist, and to seal their testimony by their blood; they afterwards by the incoming of the spirit of life into them "stand up on their feet," and ascend up to heaven in a cloud, their enemies beholding them.

Antichrist and the two witnesses are the principal characters of whom prophecy speaks, as contemporaneously existing and acting important parts in Judea, during the period of Israel's first restoration.

One more subject of inquiry demands our attention.

4. The state of the Gentile world during this period.

The Gentile world is deeply concerned in Israel's history throughout, especially, however, at this momentous period, for out of that world are the nations to come, who, according to the purpose of God, shall be gathered against Jerusalem for the battle of Armageddon, the closing scene preparatory to the advent. Great preparations for this will doubtless be going on in the world, however the world may be little aware of it; the Gospel will be, in all probability, more faithfully, distinctly, and loudly preached than ever. It is God's instrument for ripening tares, as well as wheat, "a savour of death unto death," as well as "life unto life;" and when the harvest time draws nigh, the instrument will be diligently employed. As the end of this dispensation, the advent itself, will involve

the outpouring of the last vials of wrath on apostate and godless Christendom; so the closing years will involve in an extraordinary degree, the exercise of that gracious instrumentality which, by proffering escape and salvation to all who will have it, involves the uttermost guilt in all who reject it. The gospel shall be preached as a witness to all nations, and then, out of all nations who have heard it, shall multitudes who have scorned it be "gathered into the valley of Jehosaphat, that God may plead with them by fire and sword." (Isa. lxvi. 16.)

But while the gospel of the grace of God, and the great salvation will, in its abuse and neglect, be instrumental in ripening the world for the great day of God Almighty; the power of evil, and the working of the Prince of darkness, will, in its most seductive form, gather strength, and exercise fatal influence to the production of the same result. Satan keeps pace in his efforts with those that are made by the agents of light and champions of truth. He runs as it were, close on the wheels of the gospel chariot; and when he cannot efface the track, he nicely imitates it, for the blinding of those who may seek to follow it: or, to use the Lord's own simile, wheresoever the seed of life is sown, there also does Satan, with a prodigal hand, scatter the tares. Amazing will be his diligence in those latter days! Amazing, therefore, is his diligence, now, when, as we believe, the latter days are close at hand. What, I would ask, is Socialism, Mormonism, Rationalism? What but the crafty work, the soul-destroying influence of Satan, slaying their thousands and tens of thousands; yet, alas! but

the earnest of what the world will realize, both as to delusion and destruction during the time of "the end," the period of the first restoration. Then, indeed, and particularly at the close of that period, will Satan's wrath be great, (Rev. xii. 12,) and special will be his preparation for Armageddon and its issue. The Bible is explicit here: "And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of GOD Almighty." Hence the preparation, special indeed, and no doubt terribly effective. Here are agents abundantly competent to drill and equip the nations for "the great day of God Almighty." And well will they do their work; the tuition will be perfect of its kind; well fitted will the nations be for that day, and all that day involves; well fitted as instruments, in the first instance, for executing on Israel, God's last most terrible chastisement—equally fitted themselves, in the second instance, as subjects for that "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power," which God proclaims as their own merited portion and endless doom. (2 Thess. i. 9.)

Such, I suggest, as a brief sketch of the interesting and momentous period which will elapse between the commencement of the partial restoration of Israel, and the advent of our Lord. The particular point, however, in the history, or period, at which we are supposed to have arrived in this lecture, and which,

as preparatory to the next lecture, ought to be noticed, is this—the actual occupation of Judea by Israel in part; their cities and temple rebuilt; and the man of sin, and the witnesses on the stage, or ready to appear, and about to enact their important parts in coming events.

The history of these individuals will form the subject of the next lecture; for the present, we conclude with the following remarks, suggested by that which has now been considered:

1. How obviously does the present state of Israel harmonize with her prospective state, and indicate its approach!

Israel is to be restored to Judea; and, in order to this, not only is Israel kept as a people perfectly distinct from all others on the face of the earth, but is herself, in her individual members, longing and yearning for the fact of this restoration; ready to avail themselves in large numbers, at any moment, of the opportunity, should it be granted, of hastening to the land of their fathers, and establishing themselves there.

It is notorious, as persons well-informed on the subject say, that never since her dispersion, until within the last few years, has Israel been fitted to occupy the land by reason of her utter ignorance of agriculture, and other occupations of various kinds, essential to the well-being, and very social existence of a distinct and independent people. But it is not so now; within the last thirty years, they have, in this respect, undergone a remarkable and most advantageous change. Formerly they were precluded,

in some countries, by legal enactments, as well as prejudices entertained against intercourse with them, from the possibility of acquiring practical knowledge and information common to all others in the world; schools were closed against them; and opportunities of availing themselves of the advantage, by mastering the principles, and witnessing the experiments in halls and lectures, of practical science, were absolutely denied them. They were, in fact, regarded with suspicion and ill-will, all the world over; and it seemed for ages to be deemed almost essential to the interest and good policy of nations, to keep this people in a state of the utmost degradation and ignorance! Not so now; a different feeling has sprung up. People "pity her stones," and commiserate her desolate condition; the hindrance and obstruction to her social well-being and intellectual culture, are mainly and generally removed; and Israel has availed herself of the providential change; she is now on a par, well nigh, with others amongst whom she dwells; and, intelligent naturally, as the rest of mankind, is possessed also of all the appliances of knowledge, of all the practical information requisite for the occupation of Judea on her own account, and for her establishment there, as a distinct and independent nation.

Who does not recognise the hand of God in this? Who not see the *providence* of God working with, and working out, the promises and *prophecies* of God? Who not acknowledge a manifest and striking harmony between present circumstances and prospective events? Who not see that the time to favour

Zion, the set time, is fast coming, if not come? Who not recognise signal preparation—the proclamation almost—for the *first restoration* to the promised land?

2. How distinct the object we should contemplate, and the hope we should cherish, in reference to Israel as a nation!

Not their conversion, any more than that of any other nation, nor yet their restoration as a whole, but a *restoration in part, and that in an unconverted state.* This is what we are to look for, and actually to expect as the next change in her eventful history. With this, however, beyond its expectation, we are not concerned, we have nothing to do with effecting or forwarding it; it is not to be accomplished by Christian energy or Christian effort. The event is predicted not as a rule of duty, or motive to action, but as an object of hope, and first link in the chain of momentous circumstances which shall characterize the "time of the end," and in its arrival determine that "that time" is begun; an event, therefore, which, beyond all other, and before all other, is now to be anticipated with intense interest, and desired, too, with devout aspiration; for portentous as it will be of approaching trial, ominous of days of surpassing tribulation, still will it unfold to the Church of God the "budding of the fig-tree;" and exhibit in unmistakeable light the sign "that the coming of the Son of man draweth nigh," and that the full harvest, not only of Israel's restoration, but of the world's regeneration, is close at hand.

3. How rapidly, how soon, may her partial Restoration be effected!

Everything combines to prove this; not only do the astonishing political changes which characterize the world's history in these latter days render nothing, not even the restoration of Israel to Judea, politically impossible, or politically improbable; but the marvellous adaptation and power of existing means for the accomplishment of such an end, also strongly favour the idea. The rapidity and facility of communication everywhere existing; valleys literally filled up, and mountains made plain; railways traversing the earth through its length and breadth; steamboats plying their engines and ploughing their way, despite wind and weather, on every sea; projects of India itself being brought within a fortnight's travel from England — *what marvels are these!* Would our fathers have credited the report or possibility of such things? And are they nothing to the purpose of God's plans? Has God nothing to do with them? Is there aught on the land, or aught on the sea, unpermitted, unemployed, undirected by Him? Or aught not positively overruled and positively designed for the accomplishment of His end? How striking, then, that in this peculiar time of the world's history, in these latter days, and not before, such discoveries, such appliances of science should be made! How striking, that when other things conspire to intimate that the dispensation is waning and waxing to its close—when the Gospel has been translated into every tongue, when missionary spirit and enterprise are pervading every church—when knowledge is increased—how striking that at this time, when the restoration would be thus inferentially sup-

posed to be drawing nigh, such facilities for its rapid accomplishment should be originated and exist! Yea, and when, just when Israel should be prepared for the first time by acquisition of knowledge for the occupation of the land; the way should be physically opened up through all nations where they are scattered, whereby they might return to the same. And once more too: how striking that, as the period of this restoration, from its beginning till the advent of the Lord, will be short and much must be done during that period in the way of building and rebuilding, the art should have attained to such excellency and perfection, that *towns* are literally now erected while *houses* were building in former days. An emporium, for instance, is demanded for the great exhibition of the industry of all nations, and *in less than half a year*, the Crystal Palace stands forth a monument of constructive ability — itself the wonder of wonders! England's richest contribution, surpassing all, as comprehending all in that stupendous spectacle!

Oh! then, are our eyes blinded that we cannot see what God is doing, or that God is *doing at all*, in all this? Will we never behold His hand, or hear His voice, unless the one be actually seen in the writing on the wall, or the other literally heard in the delivery of Sinai's law, and pealing forth of Sinai's thunders? Away with this obtuseness and unbelief! God is working, rapidly working; all things are hurrying on to the great, the tremendous crisis! Infidelity alone can deny it. The time is approaching; we know not the day nor the hour, but it comes

and quickly! The first restoration of Israel, pregnant with events unparalleled in the history of the world, dawns on the horizon: *in this generation it may come to pass.*

4. Lastly, How momentous the question of our own individual state in connection with coming events!

This is the point; and these lectures are valuable just so far as they serve to bring this before us, and compel honest investigation in reference to it. Knowledge, even of God's own truth, is useless, and worse than useless, unless it be practically influential. To understand Israel's prospects may be intensely interesting, but at last to be prepared for our own is, or ought to be, incalculably more so; and, as we have seen, our own are intimately connected with theirs—they will be realized together. *They* are being fitted for theirs—are *we* being fitted for ours? *They* are being prepared for the restoration—are *we* being prepared for all that shall accompany that restoration? If these lectures further not this, bring us not nearer to God in heart and life, separate us not more from an ungodly world, attach us not more to the adorable Saviour, induce not, in short, a growing meetness for the presence and coming of the Lord, then better—*far better*—that they had neither been delivered on my part, nor heard on yours! "But, beloved, I am persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though I thus speak;" I am persuaded—God Almighty grant the persuasion may be fulfilled at last!—that many, many whom I

now address will, when Israel's first restoration shall open upon them—no longer as a prophecy, but as an accomplished fact—lift up their hearts in holy, happy, but humble confidence that their own redemption draweth nigh.

LECTURE III.

ISRAEL'S CONTEMPORARIES—ANTICHRIST AND THE WITNESSES.

"AND WHEN THEY SHALL HAVE FINISHED THEIR TESTIMONY, THE BEAST THAT ASCENDETH OUT OF THE BOTTOMLESS PIT SHALL MAKE WAR AGAINST THEM, AND SHALL OVERCOME THEM, AND KILL THEM."—Revelation xi. 7.

THE subject, or rather subjects, to which your attention will be called in this Lecture, are far too comprehensive to admit of any preliminary observations, beyond such as may be requisite to prove their connection with that which was brought to your notice in the last. In that, I endeavoured to shew, as I gather myself from God's Word, that a partial restoration, or a restoration of a part of Israel, to the promised land, and their establishment there—their cities, especially that of Jerusalem with its temple, being rebuilt—is the next great event to be looked for in their prospective history. I also advert to certain remarkable persons who are to appear on the

platform of Judea at that time, and play no unimportant part in the eventful history of the latter days; such persons being, as described in Scripture, first, THE ANTICHRIST, or MAN OF SIN: secondly, THE WITNESSES. To the consideration of the history of these persons, especially as connected with that of Israel, I proposed on this occasion to direct your attention.

I need scarcely say that there are few subjects relating to prophecy, concerning which greater difference of opinion prevails than those before us. The Man of Sin and the Witnesses, have largely exercised the ingenuity of interpreters, and given rise to various theories and conjectures—more curious than scriptural—in explanation of the nature of their *being*, as well as of their actings and end. Instead of occupying our time by discussing, or even enumerating these opinions, I shall, as before, at once state, what I believe to be the true view, and then illustrate and confirm the same by reference to Scripture.

The view I take is this: That, when Israel shall be partially restored, dwelling at peace in their rebuilt cities and villages, a *man*, emphatically denominated, and emphatically being, the MAN OF SIN, will appear; that he will be a literal man, an individual human being, energized by Satan, and possessed therefore of supernatural powers, and urging therewith marvellous pretensions; that he will be accompanied by another individual, a false prophet, and that this false prophet will cause an image to be made to the man of sin, which image will be made to speak, and be almost universally worshipped.

That by flatteries and address he will ingratiate himself with the world at large, and be recognised and obeyed as the great head of the Gentile nations; that Israel also will be deluded by his seduction and lying wonders, and receive him for a season as the promised Messiah; that, thus received and recognised, he will make a covenant with Israel, which stands for three and a half years, but at the close of that time he will work deceitfully, break the covenant, and become their deadly enemy. That at this time—the time when he breaks the covenant—he will set himself up in the temple of God at Jerusalem, shewing himself that he is God, arrogating the very perfections, attributes, and glory of God, and claiming universal homage and adoration. That he will then commence a system of persecution against Israel, and all in the world who refuse to acknowledge his pretensions, unprecedented in the history of man, which terminates at last in what is called "Jacob's trouble," or "the great tribulation." That about this time, and while these persecutions are raging, two other remarkable individuals will appear, denominated "the Witnesses," that they will be just what their name imports—*witnesses;* but witnesses for God and His cause, against antichrist and his cause. That they will finish their testimony and accomplish their work in three and a half years, and, having so done, will be overcome by antichrist and put to death; that they will lie dead for three and a half days, and then will rise up on their feet, and ascend up in a cloud to heaven. That about the same time, or immediately afterwards, there will be

a gathering of all nations, under antichrist their head, (for the nations will cleave to him though Israel reject him,) against Israel and Jerusalem, in order to the siege of the city, the accomplishment of the battle of Armageddon, and the events of the great day of God Almighty; that at the close of this battle the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, will personally appear in power and great glory, to overwhelm with utter destruction antichrist and his host, and take to Himself the kingdoms of this world for ever and ever.

Such I take to be the Bible account of this matter; such the history it presents, in brief, of antichrist and the witnesses; our business now is not with the whole of their history, but only with that part which precedes and is introductory to the battle of Armageddon.

I. THE ANTICHRIST.

In regard to antichrist, I shall endeavour to elucidate the following particulars; *First,* his individual humanity, or that he will be an individual human being. *Secondly,* his character and assumption. *Thirdly,* his supernatural constitution. *Fourthly,* his influence. *Fifthly,* the duration of his reign and power. If we exhibit and make clear these points, we shall have a somewhat comprehensive and connected view of the history of this remarkable person.

1. His individual humanity, or that he will be an individual human being.

Taking the Bible as our guide, it really seems strange

that any other idea should be entertained of him; endless as are the passages referring to antichrist—himself, his character, his actings, and his end—they all with one accord, so far as I understand them, proclaim him to be an individual man. All the attributes, circumstances as well as appellations of individual humanity, are addressed and ascribed to him. He is distinctly called and declared to be a *man*, "that man of sin," (2 Thess. ii. 3,) which itself, and in the absence of any positive contradiction to it elsewhere in Scripture, ought to be conclusive; or if not, it is difficult to know on what principle we are to understand the Bible, and arrive at fixed conclusions at all about its meaning. In Revelation xiii. 18, he is called *a man:* "Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred threescore and six." The enigma here is in the *number*, not in the *nature;* the nature is declared plainly, and that is human—it is the number of a *man*. Also he is called "the son of perdition," (2 Thess. ii. 3,) and so was Judas, but Judas was a man, and the natural inference is, that such also will be his antitype. John says, (1 John ii. 18,) "Ye have heard that antichrist (or, as it ought to be rendered, *the* antichrist) shall come, even now are there many antichrists." But who were these many antichrists? Who but men—Christ-denying, ungodly men—but *men!* And who, then, or what would be, *the* antichrist yet to come, but *a man* too? Evidently the apostle intended that the "many" then present, were the same as the one to come—the same essentially in nature, both physical and moral, however

different in maturity of evil. Nay, more, Christ himself was *a man*—God-man, it is true, but man still—man as any other, sin only excepted. Then antichrist, who is to appear as a false Christ, must needs be a *man* too, or how is it possible he could palm himself off for Christ, or gain credence from any for his pretensions? Antichrist is also described as a king, even as other kings. Thus Daniel (chap. vii. 24) teaches that "ten kings arise, and then another," who is undoubtedly, as verse 25 explains, the antichrist. Where is the difference, then—the difference in nature—between the "other" and the "ten" preceding? The ten are certainly literal kings, individual men, reigning, or to reign, on the earth; on what imaginable ground is it argued that in regard to individuality, or nature, the "other" shall be different? Also, he is denominated the "vile person," (Dan. xi. 21,) than which no clearer assertion of individuality could well be made.

But, in fact, that antichrist would be an individual man was never questioned in the first and purer ages of the Church; no other opinion then obtained or existed on the matter. The idea of a power or system, or even series of individuals, being symbolized by the man of sin, was utterly unknown. This sprang up in after ages, not from clearer understanding or closer investigation of the prophetic word, but from straining the prophetic word to meet the circumstances of the times. It is the historical principle of interpretation to which we are indebted for this innovation, and which, as historians tell us, was introduced into the Church, for the first time, in or about the twelfth cen-

tury. Prior to that time it would seem that prophecy was *literally* understood; and predictions now made to range over a period of some eighteen hundred or two thousand years, were limited in their application to the "time of the end." Or be this as it may, and the historical principle of interpretation introduced when it may, how much sanction it derives from the best authority—the immediate followers of the apostles and their disciples—will best appear from their own writings, some extracts and specimens of which will be found at the close of this lecture.

2. His character and assumption.

A few quotations out of the multiplicity with which Scripture abounds on this point must suffice. Daniel is replete with information. He says, "In the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance, and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people. And through his policy also he shall cause craft to prosper in his hand; and he shall magnify *himself* in his heart, and by peace shall destroy many: he shall also stand up against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without hand." Here his picture is accurately drawn—a king of vast knowledge and mighty power, but *not his own;* it is derived, as we shall see, from Satan; he persecutes the holy people, Israel, and destroys them wonderfully; he stands up at last, magnifying himself in his heart against the Prince of princes, but is broken without hand, because de-

stroyed by that prince, even by the brightness of his coming.

Again, mark his assumption, as portrayed chap. xi. 36, "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished; for that that is determined shall be done." Isaiah xiv. is also particularly deserving our notice here. What a description is given in the ninth and following verses, contemplating, indeed, his descent and reception into hell, but describing his character and assumption, which made his entrance thither so notorious—"Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet *thee* at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, *even* all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou become weak as we? art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High." And to the same effect we read, 2 Thess. ii., "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of

God, shewing himself that he is God." We need no more to demonstrate his character, or his assumption; inconceivable this! were it not written—but so it is written, and so it shall be—"he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God."

See here again a proof, clear and conclusive, that antichrist is an individual human being,—not a power, but a person,—not a series of persons already apparent in part, but a single person yet to appear. For how otherwise is this scripture to receive its accomplishment? Has it, as yet, been fulfilled that "he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God?" We know full well the answer we shall receive from some, and the accomplishment of the prediction that will be confidently urged in the fact of the Pope's exaltation, especially on the day of his inauguration in St Peter's at Rome; and in the blasphemous ascription of Divine honour and Divine perfection that is rendered to him by a blind and priest-ridden populace. But I would simply ask, *Is St Peter's the temple of God?* Allow all that can be said in proof of the Pope's assumption and the people's idolatry, still I ask, Is St Peter's the temple of God? Who says so? Romanists, no doubt; but will *Protestants* say so? Will they, who most stoutly maintain that the Pope is antichrist, hold their determination at such a price as this? Will they really concede the point that St Peter's is the temple of God? What, *St Peter's!* where, for ages and generations, the creature, in the shape of a wafer, has been the object of adoration to a degraded multitude! *St Peter's!*—where by masses and mummeries, crossings and bow-

ings, man is deluded, and God dishonoured! *St Peter's!*—where prostrate crowds, forgetful of God as though He were not, reverence images, and kiss pretended relics! *St Peter's!*—where Christ, the Light of Life, is positively banished to make way for the light of candles; and the burning of the latter substituted as a propitiatory or acceptable rite for the agony of the former! *St Peter's, the temple of God!*

It is strange that we, who deny that the Pope is antichrist, are sometimes charged with a fault in our Protestantism. We care not to retort the charge; but we might fairly ask, What sort of Protestantism is that which, knowing its service and worship, its figments and idolatries, yet maintains that *St Peter's is the temple of God!* No, this at least our Protestantism cannot consent to; but against it is our *protest* most unequivocally entered. St Peter's, we say, is not the temple of God, but rather is it the "chamber of imagery," the school-house of Belial, the abomination of Satan. *The temple of God!* Let God teach us what is the temple of God. The temple of God is the Saviour's body; "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up;" (John ii. 19;) the temple of God is the believer's body; "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost;" (1 Cor. vi. 19;) the temple of God is the church in the aggregate; "In whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord;" (Eph. ii. 21;) and the temple of God is the sacred edifice which once stood on God's holy hill, built by Solomon, and honoured by the presence and glory of God. These

respectively, and none other on earth, are "*the temple of God,*" so declared by God, and so being as a matter of fact. In these, then, one or other, antichrist shall sit. Three are, of course, out of the question,—*the Lord's body, the believer's body, the mystical body,*—one remains, the last, *the temple in Jerusalem;* but this is also out of the question, for it exists no longer. True, and therefore no antichrist has, as yet, appeared; for no temple is there, nor has there been, in which he could sit. But again is that temple to exist, again to be built, and built, too, as expressly by order and pattern from God as was the former. Witness Ezekiel's testimony, chapter xl. to the end; and in *that temple,* which *will be the temple of God,* shall antichrist sit, and, in awful and daring assumption, "exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped."

3. His supernatural constitution.

The assumption of antichrist, daring and blasphemous as it is, is, however, little to be wondered at, when we remember not only who he is, but what he is, and whence his power and energy are derived. Antichrist, though a mortal human being, an individual man, will be no common mortal, no ordinary man. A terrible peculiarity belongs to him. In addition to the sinful nature common to man, in him will dwell and operate all that can be communicated of the evil and energy of Satan; "whose coming," says Paul, "is after the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders." "After the working,"—that is, according to or in conformity with the working—the result of his working, and the effectual manifestation of the same. "Working" here literally means *energising* or *inwork-*

ing, and is intended evidently to show how entirely the man of sin is leavened and actuated by satanic influence,—so possessed as to be constitutionally satanic,—the subject, to the very uttermost possible, of the inspired energy and communicated mind and ability of the Evil One.

Antichrist, observe, then, is not, as sometimes represented, Satan himself; nor even, strictly speaking, Satan incarnate. Satan has no such power or prerogative, we hold, as to take humanity into himself, which we consider constitutes *incarnation,* as distinguished from *possession.* For a being to incarnate himself, is for that being not merely to enter into a body of flesh and blood and dwell there, but so to take that body into himself, and introduce himself into that body as that they become actually one. Thus did the eternal Son incarnate Himself, and God and man were one Christ. But such power and prerogative belong, we hold, exclusively to Deity. Satan cannot thus harmonize himself, or identify himself with humanity; he may enter into a man, he may move and influence the man, he may dwell for a season in the man, but he does not thus, nor can he by any means become that man so as to be himself *man;* he not only remains Satan still, but *only* Satan, and that man not only remains human still, but *only* human; the two, though dwelling together, are still two, and not one,—not only two natures, but *two persons,* distinct in themselves, and, under all circumstances, so to remain for ever. Antichrist, then, I say, is not Satan incarnate,—not Satan personally one with man, but Satan in a man, possessing the man, and communicating to him, to the

uttermost possible, all his own evil and power. This is the force and meaning of Paul's statement, that "his coming is after the working of Satan," and the same is enunciated in Rev. xiii. The dragon, which is explained to be Satan, (chapter xii. 9,)—the dragon gave power to the beast, (which is antichrist,) and his seat, and great authority.

Such, then, is the constitution and power, such the nature and origin of the man of sin; no wonder at his assumption and blasphemy, no wonder that such a one should be emphatically *antichrist!* or Christ's virulent opponent: energized by Satan, this would follow of absolute necessity. As humanity indwelt by Deity was essentially *anti-satan;* so humanity energized by Satan, must be essentially *anti-christ.* The hostility is mutual, inevitable, and eternal, in the nature of the case, even as that between God and Satan themselves: the humanity, in both cases respectively, is but the agent through which they respectively act. The essential principles of light and darkness are therein and thereby developed. Deity assumed humanity expressly in order "to destroy the works of the devil." (1 John iii. 8.) And the devil energizes humanity expressly in order to defeat, if he can, the intention and work of Deity. From the beginning the strife hath prevailed. "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel:" this, the first promise of the coming Saviour and His victory, was also the comprehensive prediction of the coming and ceaseless contest till that victory. And no sooner did Deity, even the eternal Son, incarnate Himself and enter on His work, than Satan set himself in direct and daring opposition

to Him; he challenged Him to personal combat in the wilderness; he assailed His purpose through the agency of Peter, (Matt. xvi. 21–23;) he assaulted Him with all the power of darkness in the garden; he betrayed him by Judas, that son of perdition; and yet again will he venture the battle, and dispute supremacy on earth with Him by another "son of perdition," tenfold more a child of hell than the former—even ANTICHRIST, that man of sin, who is yet to come. No wonder then, I say, at antichrist's assumption and blasphemous daring: he is but the tool and agent of another—not himself that other—but his representative and ambassador, vested in his habiliments, endowed by his spirit, armed with his weapons, energized by his might! *Antichrist!* significant name—Christ's antagonist, Christ's CONTRARY! A contrary at every point—perfect as a *contrary* because perfect as a *parallel.* In Christ we see man indwelt by God; in antichrist we see man inwrought by Satan! In Christ we see God in man humbling himself, even below humanity, ("I am a worm and no man"—"the servant of men;") in antichrist we see Satan in man, exalting himself above all that is called God, and is worshipped! In Christ we see one who came not to do his own will but God's; in antichrist we see one who came not to do God's will but his own. (Dan. xi. 36.) Christ exalts with Himself to highest glory all that trust Him; antichrist sinks with himself into deepest perdition all that receive him. (Rev. xix. 20.) Christ seals with the broad seal of heaven—the witness of the Spirit—all His own; antichrist marks with the

broad seal of hell, even the mark of the beast, his own also. How perfect the *parallel*, how perfect therein the *contrast* also!

The last particular in the contrast leads me for a moment, though a digression, to notice a still more remarkable and comprehensive contrast, not merely between Christ and antichrist, though involving that, but between the glorious Trinity of Heaven, and what may be styled, and justly, the blasphemous trinity of Hell. The thirteenth chapter of Revelation presents this—though indeed it is a *parody*, rather than a contrast, (a parody—blasphemous and appalling in the extreme,) of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by Satan, the antichrist, and the false prophet: so striking too, that it is impossible to suppose it is a mere coincidence, or aught else than an instructive description of the devil's intent, and development of the purpose of hell.

In this chapter, then, we see the dragon, which is the devil, giving power to the beast, which is antichrist; and another beast, which is the false prophet, exercising all the power of the first beast, doing "great wonders;" and, especially, causing an image to be made to the first beast, and "marking" all who worshipped this image, conferring on them various immunities and privileges. Now, what is all this but, to the letter, a parody of the very being and operations of the glorious Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost in heaven? Observe, Satan gives power to the beast, or antichrist; the Father gives power to the Son, even Jesus! Antichrist is, as we have seen, man ener-

gized by Satan to do his will; Jesus is man indwelt by God to do His will! The false prophet exercises all the power of the beast, or antichrist, works miracles, makes an image to the beast, and marks his followers; the Holy Ghost exercises all the power of Christ, works miracles, makes Christ's image on the hearts and characters of his people, and stamps them with the seal of God! I ask, what is all this? What, but an astounding contrast! yea, parody!—a parody of heaven by hell—of the glorious Trinity of the former by the blasphemous and accursed trinity of the latter.

If this be correct, let it be noticed, as far as it goes, how strongly it makes for the literal, as opposed to the historical principle of interpretation.

4. His influence.

Concerning this Daniel writes, "I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them;" and again, "And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws; and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times, and the dividing of time." (Dan. vii. 21–25.) Also Rev. xiii. 16, "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand or in their foreheads; and that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." All, then, all but God's own people, the elect, are evidently seduced by antichrist; the whole world besides bow to his yoke.

Nor is Israel any exception to this. At this time, they are deluded as all the rest, given up to believe a lie; they refused the true Messiah, the spiritual King, and desired and would have a temporal king. One comes, after their own heart, and him they do receive. It was a remarkable and significant statement uttered by our Lord, referring no doubt to antichrist, "I have come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive," (John v. 43;) and him, therefore, when he comes, they do receive; not only as king, but probably also as the supposed Messiah. False Christs are to appear in those days; antichrist will, doubtless, be of this character. Satan himself appears as an angel of light, thus he effects his purpose; antichrist will appear as *the Christ*, and thus he will seek to effect his; and avowedly combining in himself at once the office of King and Saviour, confirming his pretensions, too, by signs and lying wonders, he will not only lull all suspicion, but engage the sympathies, and answer the expectations, of Israel to the uttermost.

The final boast over antichrist, when destruction shall have come upon him, as revealed in Isaiah, favours the impression of his prior pretension and reception as Christ: "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!" (Isa. xiv. 12.) The application of the term "Lucifer" here to antichrist is very remarkable: Lucifer means simply, "the morning star,"

and is so used in this passage, as the following clause —"son of the morning," evidently imports. Now, Christ is really and truly the "bright and morning star;" and what, then, can the boast over antichrist, as "Lucifer" fallen, mean, except that he once arrogated that title and character to himself, but is now fallen from his high pretension, and "brought down," as it says, "to hell, to the side of the pit?" Doubtless such is the inference from the passage, and such the truth of the case. Antichrist in his day prefers such claim and pretension; he "comes in his own name," but as a Prince and a Saviour: and they who once rejected the true Lucifer—"the bright and morning star," are righteously given up to receive the first-born of hell, in his blasphemous pretensions to be the same.

But Israel receives antichrist only for a season—a short season—three years and a half, as I believe, then he breaks covenant with them, and becomes their enemy. The fact of this breach is revealed, though the reason is not; possibly, however, the reason may be, that they refused to worship him, or "the abomination of desolation" set up by him in the temple. The setting up of the abomination in the temple, may possibly open their eyes to his true character; and, eliciting their utter abhorrence and renunciation of him, induce on his part the breach of the covenant, and with that the end of all alliance and intercourse between them. Daniel's prophecy and description of the events of the last week, already commented on, furnishes, substantially, this information, "The prince that shall come," we are told,

"shall confirm the covenant for one week;" but "in *the midst of the week* he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate," or, as the margin renders it, "Upon the battlements shall be the idols of the desolator"—which is evidently the abomination of desolation spoken of by our Lord in Matthew xxiv.;—and this, as the verse goes on to teach, is the cause of desolation, which is to continue with unmitigated fury until the end, or, "that determined shall be poured on the desolate." So that in the *middle of the week*, observe, antichrist's connection with Israel closes, and their reception of him and submission to him consequently lasts only for the period of three and a half years.

A word here on the "abomination of desolation" foretold by our Lord "to stand in the holy place." This, we know, is commonly supposed to refer to the siege under Titus, and to have received its accomplishment by the planting of the Roman standard, at that time, in the temple at Jerusalem.

But how can that be? The Lord says, "When ye, therefore, shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth let him understand,) then let them which be in Judea flee to the mountains." This, then, was to be the signal for their flight, and they were to *flee to the mountains*. But was it so? Did they flee to the mountains on the occasion of the siege of Titus? or, did they flee at all on witnessing the standard set up in the holy place? Neither one nor other was the case: the Christians escaped, *when they*

did escape, not to the mountains, but to Pella, a city of Judea; and they escaped not *after,* but *before* the Roman standard had even entered the city! When Titus took Jerusalem no Christians were there; when he planted the standard in the holy place (admitting he ever did so), no believers remained to "see it"—none to mark and avail themselves of the predicted sign! How, then, is it possible that the Roman standard, should be "the abomination" spoken of by our Lord Jesus? Every circumstance and fact of the case discountenances, nay, forbids such a supposition. Besides, we would ask, in what sense, abstractedly, was the Roman standard "the abomination of desolation?" What ground is there for so designating it? Was it more so than the Persian, or Grecian, or any other standard on the face of the earth? Let it not be argued that the *fact* of the *Roman* being set up in the holy place made it the "abomination;" for this we utterly deny; "the abomination of desolation"—be the *thing* what it may—is, in itself, and not in its circumstances, the "abomination;" it is something in itself abominable, quite apart from its location in "the holy place;" and its transportation there is predicted by our Lord not as changing in any respect its own proper character, but simply presenting, in this peculiarity of circumstance, a signal of flight to his own people.

The Roman standard has no connection whatever, we believe, with "abomination;" as the term is here used, and as generally used in Scripture, "abomination" is, almost universally, connected with idols and idolatry; thus we read, "Ashtoreth the abomination of

the Zidonians, Chemosh the abomination of the Moabites, and Milcom the abomination of the children of Ammon," (2 Kings xxiii. 13:) these being the idols of all these people respectively.

The "abomination of desolation," then, we should expect, must have something to do with idolatry, and so we find to be the case: in Daniel, according to the marginal reading, it is said to be "the idols of the desolator." Was the Roman standard an idol? If not, then clearly, whatever else the abomination may be, it is not, nor can it be that standard. But can there be a doubt as to what shall be "the abomination of desolation?" and what shall fulfil the requirements of the definition now given? We have seen not only that antichrist will himself sit in the temple saying that he is God, but also that an image shall be made to antichrist, which all, except the elect, shall be made to worship; and this, moreover, just at the time, or closely in connection with the time, when desolation unparalleled is about to begin, and when escape from Jerusalem and Judea will be infinitely desirable. Can there be a doubt, then, what is, or is to be, this abomination, or abominable thing? Surely antichrist himself, or his image, or both! They will, in the strictest sense of the term, be in themselves "abominations," even abominable idols, they will literally be set up in "the holy place;" and they will introduce, and themselves be the cause of, desolation unparalleled in the history of the world: antichrist and his image, and they alone, fulfil all the scriptural conditions of the subject, and they—one or other, or both—and they alone, will be, we believe, "the abomination of desolation."

One other particular connected with antichrist's history remains to be noticed. His influence we have seen will be great, how long will it last? or what will be

5. The duration of his reign and power?

What has been said concerning Daniel's last week in connection with antichrist determines this point. His power and reign seem to last, in a certain sense and degree, for the whole week, or seven years. At the beginning he makes a covenant with Israel and is received by them, which implies considerable influence and dominion: but his great power and kingly assumption must be supposed to date from the middle of the week—when he breaks with Israel and sets himself up in the temple—and to continue to the end. The three and a half years, as the duration of his great power, is determined also by other passages; in Rev. xiii. 5, it is declared "power was given unto him to continue forty *and* two months." In Rev. xii. 6, the woman is sustained in the wilderness for the same period, which implies her persecution by antichrist during his power; and, in chapter xi. 2, the holy city is also represented as trodden under foot forty and two months, the same period again, during which the head of the Gentile nations is thus represented to be in power. These passages literally interpreted, respectively determine the period to be three and a half years; and, admitting the individual personality of antichrist, no other interpretation can of course be adopted. The year-day theory, or the principle of interpretation which makes a day stand for a year, annihilates of necessity the individual personality of antichrist. Antichrist, on this principle,

cannot be one man, he must be something else—a power, a system, or, at least, a series of men—extending in duration of existence over no less a period than twelve hundred and sixty years; hence Popery is ordinarily assumed to be "the antichrist," by this school of interpreters; and its inapplicability to the subject—in reference to the sitting in the temple of God, ruining eternally, and without exception, all who bear its "mark," and sundry other particulars, positively predicted of antichrist—is overlooked, for the advantage, and apparent aptitude to their theory, of its prolonged though very indefinite duration.

I have given my reasons for believing antichrist to be one literal man—a single human being—and, so far as these are just and well-founded, so far also do they establish the literal principle of interpretation in reference to all circumstances connected with antichrist; and among the rest *the period of his influence, or duration of his power*—that in reference to this, days mean days, and years mean years; and nothing else. And here I am content to leave the matter; I add, however, that apart from this, to my own mind, conclusive evidence and argument against the year-day principle, I am not aware of a single sound argument deducible from Scripture whereby it can be sustained. The passages ordinarily adduced in favour of this theory, seem to me conclusive against it. For instance, God's command to the prophet, in Ezekiel iv. 4—6, "Lie thou also upon thy left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it: *according* to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For I

have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days: so shalt thou bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days: I have appointed thee each day for a year." Now what has this got to do with the year-day principle, or how does it sanction it? If anything is clear in this passage it is that a day means a day, and a year means a year. God told Ezekiel to lie so many days on his side, and he did lie so many *days*, and not so many *years!* And God said that so many years should Israel bear her iniquity; and so many years—not so may years multiplied 365 times over—did Israel bear her iniquity!

But on the year-day principle the latter ought literally to have been the case; for the year-day principle asserts that days are symbolical of years, not in reference to some other person or thing, than that of which they are primarily predicated, but *to that thing itself!* not days in *one* case symbolical of years in *another*, but days in *one* case symbolical of years in the *same!* For instance, in Revelation xi. 3, it is said, "And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days." But no, says the year-day principle, power shall not be given to the witnesses for 1260 days merely, but for 1260 years! making the days of the power of the "witnesses," symbolical of *years* of power to the same "witnesses" too! What countenance, I ask, does the instance in Ezekiel afford

to such a principle as this? The cases surely are as different as possible; in the latter, *days* are arbitrarily and unwarrantably made to be *years*, even in reference to the beings of whom days are positively spoken; in the former, *days* are made to mean nothing but *days*, and *years* nothing but *years*, in reference to the cases respectively of which they are predicated. Ezekiel's testimony, as far as it goes, instead of supporting tells directly against, and utterly forbids the principle in question.

The same line of argument is applicable to Numbers xiv. 34, a passage also, I believe, frequently adduced in favour of the year-day principle, but quite opposed to it; for here also it will be seen that days mean days, and years mean years, which is essentially at variance with the year-day principle.

In regard to Daniel's weeks, I observe, that the word translated "week" means, as Hebrew scholars tell us, simply *hebdomad*, or *seven;* not seven days, or months, or years, or aught else in particular, but simply "seven," so that the term is applicable to any period whatever—to days, or months, or years, or millenaries; and this passage, therefore, gives no support (as some might suppose from our translation) to the year-day principle. Let it, lastly, be noticed, that upon the principle we are controverting, the millennium ought to be interpreted as 365,000 years, and not 1000; for it remains to be shown why this comprehensive and expansive principle should not be available to the twentieth chapter of Revelation, as well as any other—to the glorious subject of the millennium, as well as the existence of the beast,

and the suffering of the church! Yet none of its supporters and advocates, I believe, or few if any, have ventured to maintain their consistency by such an extended, but strictly requisite application of their theory.

I pretend not, however, to enter into the discussion of this question; others have done so with far more knowledge and ability than I can pretend to. To return, therefore, to the matter in hand: I repeat that the proof of the individual personality of antichrist—which to my own mind is clear and conclusive—is proof also, equally clear, of the literality of Scripture testimony, concerning the duration of his power and period of his reign.

The termination of antichrist's rule and earthly existence, in his final overthrow and destruction, will be treated of in a future lecture.

II. The Witnesses.

I have already observed that two such characters are to appear in the latter days, and some time during the period of the first restoration. Their general history is found in the eleventh chapter of the Revelation, the chapter from which my text is taken. Let us notice,

1. When, and for what period of time, they are to be expected.

The witnesses come on the stage at the commencement of the last three and a half years of Daniel's last week, or of antichrist's reign and power. This appears clearly from the chapter before us; we are told in the third verse that they shall prophesy 1260 days;

and at the end thereof they are to be slain; but at or about the same time, "the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ," (verse 15;) and then, of course, antichrist's reign is supposed to have terminated, and antichrist himself (as will appear in a future lecture) to have been destroyed. The death of the witnesses, therefore, synchronizes very nearly with the fall of antichrist; and their official existence, or testimony, lasting, as it does, only three years and a half, must necessarily be comprehended in the last three years and a half of antichrist's reign, during the terrible distress and persecution which will characterize that eventful period.

2. Who, or what, will the Witnesses be?

Since the period of their testimony is limited to the last three and a half years of antichrist's reign, it is evident they have not yet made their appearance or entered on their office. And all theories, identifying their existence and testimony with churches of bygone days—with those, for instance, of the Albigenses, or Waldenses, or any other,—are, we conceive, devoid of any foundation. The witnesses are yet to come; and, as we firmly believe, are to be not churches at all, but simply individual human beings—men! Just as antichrist will be a man, so will the witnesses, we hold, be men too. The whole history given of them in Scripture, all that is revealed and predicted concerning them, their character, office, work, end—all without exception forbid any other idea, and clearly determine, at least to my own mind, that they are to be two men, and can be nothing else. They prophesy; they work miracles, even as Moses and Elias

wrought miracles; they are persecuted unto death; their bodies lie unburied; they rise up on their feet; and they ascend to heaven. The place, too, of their occupation; their sphere of action; the particular circumstances attendant on their end, and its consequences; the feelings elicited thereby in the ungodly world around; all are strictly and definitely revealed, just as would be the case supposing that individuals were, without question, the subjects referred to. I cannot, therefore, adopt any other interpretation than that they are individuals. The idea of their being churches, or the Old and the New Testaments, as some have said, seems to me opposed to the obvious and common-sense view of their whole history.

But admitting them to be men, who shall they be? This is not directly revealed, and no man should venture to speak with any degree of certainty or confidence about it. Yet there is much in Scripture apparently bearing on the subject, and affording strong presumptive evidence as to who one at least, if not both, of these remarkable persons shall be. Elijah, of course, is the one I refer to, and the prophecy of Malachi iv. 5, the chief Scripture testimony I adduce in support of this opinion—"Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord." Now this statement alone—"before the great and dreadful day of the Lord"—ought to determine that the prediction here has not been fulfilled; that Elijah, as here promised, is not yet come. Whatever may be urged in regard to John the Baptist, as to his being "Elias that was for to come," yet clearly he did not fulfil this predic-

tion; he came not before, or preparatory to—which is evidently intended here—the *great and dreadful day* of the LORD; but before the *gracious and merciful day* of the LORD! Christ's first coming, that day of the LORD, was not in anger and judgment, but in grace and peace; and to maintain the fulfilment of a prediction at the cost of confounding these essentially distinct days, is not very creditable to our own discernment, nor will it be very conclusive to the minds of others—by this process, to say the least of it, we give up more than we gain.

But it is still objected that the Lord Himself said, speaking of John the Baptist, "this is Elias which was for to come." True, He did say so; and what else did He say? with what did He preface this very statement? "*If ye will receive it!*" This is introductory to the statement, and involves actually the condition of its fulfilment—"If ye will receive it, this is Elias which was for to come." The fact of John being the Elias that was for to come, was dependent on the fact of Israel's so receiving him! And did they so receive him? Did they receive him at all—as a people and nation did they receive him? Let the Lord's testimony decide. In the following context He charges it upon them—illustrating their conduct by the parable of the children playing in the market-place—that they would neither receive John nor Himself; that come in what fashion God's messengers might, none would please them; that "John came, neither eating nor drinking," as an austere man, and they would not receive *him;* that He Himself came, "eating and drinking," as a social man, and

neither would they receive *Him!* No! they did not, they would not receive John; so, admit the point that John was, according to God's *intention,* the Elias that was for to come, yet not being received by Israel, according to God's *condition,* he was not Elias to them.

And was it not precisely thus, I ask, even with Christ Himself? He came to Israel, in *intention,* in *offer,* as the promised Messiah. Did Israel receive Him? No! they rejected, they crucified Him! Was He, then, in *fact* their Messiah? Certainly not—witness their present condition, the state of their city, their people, as consequent on His rejection; they would not have Him, so *in fact* He was not their Messiah. And what then? He comes again, again even to them, specially to them, primarily to them. Had the Jews received Him in the former and first instance, had Israel believed on Him, we have no reason to suppose, humanly speaking, that the present dispensation would have lasted as it has done; or perhaps, in its distinct character, have existed at all; possibly the world's history, as to its present state, would have closed then; the day of judgment would have been not long dissevered from, but closely annexed to, the day of salvation—as we find it represented in various parts of Scripture, especially in Isaiah lxi. 2, "The acceptable year of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God;" here the days are closely linked together, no interval whatever between them—possibly thus it might have been had Israel received Him; but Israel would have none of Him; Israel rejected Him, wilfully rejected

Him. And what happened? What, as a fact, then happened? Not judgment, not the "day of vengeance," in the sense here intended, but a long interval, a protracted and peculiar period, a time of waiting—Israel scattered, peeled, chastened; this then happened, happens still, and will yet happen a while—*a while indeed*—even till she shall learn the evil of her state, and the desperate sin of her unbelief, till she shall in heart and soul be prepared to receive Him, ready to cry, with intensity of desire, and rapturous welcome, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord;" and then He will come again, come again even to her, and she will receive Him.

The case is precisely parallel with that of Elias. Elias came in spirit and power in the person of John the Baptist. Had Israel so received him, his office would have been fulfilled, and no need of a second appearance; but Israel did not, and would not so receive him, and, therefore, need there is of a second appearance. And so testifies the Lord Himself, and for this very reason; for, on an occasion subsequent to that on which He said, "If ye will receive it, this is Elias that was for to come," He declared, "Elias truly shall first come, and restore all things," and added immediately, as significant, I think, of the reason of this *future* coming, "*that they knew him not,*" *in his present appearance!* "But I say unto you that Elias is come already, and *they knew him not.*" It would seem, then, that whatever may have been the ordained and actual fitness of John the Baptist for the fulfilment of the predicted mission of Elias, it was in effect nullified by the unbelief of Israel; and hence, as that

mission was not fulfilled by Elias's *substitute*, it remains yet to be fulfilled by Elias *himself*.

We believe, then, that Elias will come again, Elias himself, literally and personally, before the great and dreadful day of the Lord; whether as one of the witnesses we venture not certainly to say, but probably such will be the case.

Before I speak of the other witness, I am led by the foregoing observations to remark for a moment on a subject which presents difficulty to some minds, in connection with the literal, or futurist principle of interpretation. I allude to the silence of prophecy, on this principle, for the lengthened period of the present dispensation—which is urged by some as an objection to the principle itself. "Why," it is asked, "should prophecy pass over so long a period, even from the destruction of Jerusalem to the time immediately antecedent to the advent, which, according to the futurist and literal principle, is the case?—Why is this? Let Israel's history, as explained above, answer this question, and give, as we think it does, a satisfactory solution. The prophetic word has, throughout Scripture, primary reference to Israel; Israel, as a nation and people, is now in *abeyance*, and *so*, comparatively speaking, is, therefore, the prophetic word. From beginning to end prophecy has to do with this people, and with this people mainly; for the most part, when it takes up or alludes to other people, it is because of their connection with Israel, either as friends or foes, but rarely, if ever, as disconnected with Israel in some way. Hence, so to speak, the prophetic word waits for Israel again to occupy her proper and destined

position as the people of God, and then it opens out again in all its fulness in relation to that period; and abundant are the revelations it affords. In the meantime it just describes their state, as we see it to be, and then, and there, leaves them until the latter days, when it again takes up the thread of their history, and proclaims the wondrous circumstances whereby it shall be characterized, in reference to their Restoration, Tribulation, Salvation, and Glory. But as it touches not *their* history, from the destruction of Jerusalem to the latter days, except just to declare their desolation and dispersion, so it touches not the history of any other nation or people, because, apart from Israel, they are, I repeat, not subject-matter of prophecy at all.

If this be true, then, all attempts to apply prophecy to the history of the last eighteen centuries, or to the period since the destruction of Jerusalem, must be vain and visionary; and, of necessity, attended only with total failure. And has it not proved so? Mark the signal discrepancy which characterizes the works of those—even the ablest and most judicious—who have made the attempt; scarcely two are to be found who agree in the application of the historical principle, or who, in adjusting predictions and events, are of one mind! This is notorious; yet what else could be expected, or possibly follow, if (as we believe to be the case) there are *no events* to which prophecy, during this period, is intended to apply.

I say, then, that while Israel is not a nation, prophecy is comparatively silent—silent in regard to her, silent in regard to others—just as appears also from Daniel's prophecy of the seventieth week; this, which compre-

hends "the latter days," is, as we have seen, excised from the other sixty-nine ; to the end of this sixty-nine, and beyond it, so far as to announce the destruction of "the city," does prophecy speak, then it ceases—an indefinite period occurs, during which prophecy is silent—then comes the last week—the week of Israel's restoration, and as Israel again recovers her national existence, so does prophecy again begin to speak. And so the Lord's own prediction in Luke xxi. He foretells Israel's dispersion consequent on the destruction of Jerusalem, and then stretches on in prophetic history at once to the time of the Advent: the intermediate period He lets alone, as a period unmarked by anything save Israel's dispersion, and the visitation of the Gentiles with the Gospel, in Israel's stead.

Not only, then, to my own mind, does this *silence* of prophecy, for the period in question, present no objection to the literal principle, but it very much confirms it ; it is precisely what the nature and object of prophecy would lead me to expect; while the unquestionable discrepancy and failure (for such it must be called) which characterize all attempts to make prophecy *speak* during this period, afford a negative argument from the other side nearly as strong.

To return, however, now to the Witnesses,—admitting the probability of Elijah's being one,

Who will be the other ? Here we feel ourselves in greater doubt and difficulty still. In reference to Elijah even, we venture to assert nothing, much less so in reference to his companion. We can only again therefore adduce what may be called scriptural probabilities on the subject, and there leave it.

There are, then, three individuals celebrated in holy writ, who beyond others, are suggested for the office in question. These are Enoch, Moses, and John the Evangelist. I confess I see little in Enoch's case to justify the idea; all that can well be adduced in his favour is his translation, and possibly the fact of his witnessing for God, against the ungodly in his own day, (Jude 14;) but I think this scarcely sufficient to warrant the expectation of his return. For Moses it is urged that he is appealed to by Christ, as his witness against the Jews; that he appeared with Christ on the mount of transfiguration, as the companion of Elias; that there is something mysterious in regard to the fate of his body, as though it were kept, or destined for some future and peculiar object; and that the witnesses are said to perform several of the miracles actually wrought by Moses himself when in Egypt. John's pretensions are, that the Saviour said, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" Again, that He said, speaking of John and James, "Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized;" and that as this was never literally fulfilled in John's case, inasmuch as he alone of the apostles died a natural death, it remains possibly to be so, when he shall appear in the character of one of the Witnesses. Also the remarkable prediction in Revelation x. 11, where, preparatory, as it were, to the history of the witnesses, which immediately follows it, it is said to John, "Thou must prophesy again before many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings."

Such is the evidence in favour of these three persons respectively, and the amount of scriptural probability that one or other will fulfil the office of the second Witness; but which of the three, or whether any of the three, we know not at all; it is, we again remind you, a matter of almost pure conjecture. Indeed, for my own part, I think it right to say, that while I quite believe that the Witnesses will be two individuals, I by no means think it needful to believe that they *must* be any individuals who, prior to their then appearance, had a previous existence on earth,—individuals, therefore, recalled from the invisible world—not even Elias, as one of necessity. Elias, I believe, will assuredly come again, and come again "before the great and dreadful day of the Lord;" and Elias will, I think it probable, be one of the Witnesses, but, as already intimated, I utterly disclaim the *assertion* that he will; Scripture does not assert it, neither should we, nor do I see any occasion for needlessly encountering the objection, entertained by many, against the idea of men coming from heaven, to die on earth! I believe Elias, or any other saint in bliss, would with infinite alacrity and readiness do so; but if the idea be felt by any, as it is, to involve an insurmountable difficulty, let it not be maintained as essentially involved in the personality of the Witnesses; let it not be said that if the Witnesses be men, they must be men from the other world; or that, in holding the one position, we are of necessity pledged to the reception of the other! By no means! Be it that two *beatified* and *departed* saints shall not return to witness and die, then two *present* and *terrestrial* saints

shall, without doubt, witness and die—and this is all we contend for, all we assert; there is nothing at least impossible, or objectionable in this; and this, should it prove hereafter to be the case, as it would abundantly fulfil all the requirements of the prediction, so ought it to be all that interpreters of the same should venture to insist on, or care to maintain.

3. Their object and occupation.

The object and occupation of the Witnesses is just what their name imports, *to bear witness*—witness, we believe, for Christ, against antichrist and the false prophet; as Moses and Aaron, in former days, did against Jannes and Jambres. Indeed it would seem that Moses and Aaron were signal types of these Witnesses, and Jannes and Jambres of antichrist and the false prophet; the analogy is remarkable and precise—Moses and Aaron witnessed for the Lord, and wrought genuine and astounding miracles; Jannes and Jambres witnessed for Pharaoh, and sought to counteract the Lord's servants, by magical illusions and lying wonders!

Precisely thus, it seems, will the Witnesses act in their day, and precisely similar the antagonists, in character and conduct, they will have to contend with. The Man of sin, and false prophet, deceive the world and delude mankind with their marvellous doings, "their signs, and lying wonders," "making fire to come down from heaven in the sight of men;" the Witnesses, empowered by God, also do their wonders, so that "fire proceedeth out of their mouth and devoureth their enemies," and they "have power to shut heaven, so that it rain not in the days of their

prophecy: and have power over the waters to turn them into blood, and to smite the earth with plagues as often as they will." In the exercise of such powers against their antagonists they bear testimony for God and His Christ, until they seal it with their blood; like John the Baptist, the Elias in his day, they finish their work in the appointed time, even three and a half years; and then, "the beast, (which is antichrist,) that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another, because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. And after three days and a half the Spirit of Life from God entered into them, and they stood up on their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud, and their enemies beheld them."

Such is the history of the Witnesses, their character, conduct, faithfulness, and end. Jerusalem the great city, symbolised here, as in other places in Scripture (Isa. i. 10; Jer. xxiii. 14) by Sodom and Egypt, is the chief sphere of their labours, and the place of their end. Here the Lord was crucified, and here these two devoted

and faithful ones *finish their testimony, and close their earthly career.* The world shall triumph over them! Antichrist and his people shall rejoice! The troublers of the earth are gone,—will they cry! But, alas! not its *trouble—that,* as they will find, *is yet to come:* the death and ascension of the Witnesses seem the very signal for the cloud to burst; for immediately there follows, "even the same hour," a great earthquake; and then the announcement of the sounding of "the seventh angel," preparatory to the closing act of the earth's present history—the battle of Armageddon, the great tribulation, and the advent of the Lord.

To the former of these subjects our next lecture will be devoted. We close the present with the following remarks:—

1. How manifestly is future history shadowed forth in present experience; prospects to come, in realities which now are! What do we see on every side but evil gathering strength, hurrying on with frightful rapidity, and increasing ratio, towards its predicted consummation? What has been the general history of the whole dispensation, since the Lord's ascension, but the growth of evil? The Gospel has done its work no doubt—called out, and is still calling out, the elect; but what are they numerically, in proportion to the rest? *And the rest!* what is their state morally and religiously—their state, as tested by the Gospel, the only criterion of good and evil? What, I ask, is the state of Christendom? What of continental nations? What of our own—the population at large? Be it that the schoolmaster is abroad, what has he taught? what is he teaching? what fruit is he producing?

What has he done, what is he doing, for man's moral and spiritual state? Much, it may be, for the expansion of his mind, much for the increase of general knowledge, much for the advancement of his intellectual state, and even temporal prosperity; but the question is, what has he done, not for the mind, but for the soul? not for intellect, but for principle? not for mammon, but for God? not for time, but for eternity? What has he done, I ask, for man's moral and spiritual state? Is Popery waning? Is Infidelity decreasing? Is licentiousness checked? What, then, I ask, is *Tractarianism?* what *Rationalism?* what *Socialism?*—these gigantic evils of the present day, which have sprung up, not as relics of their old and antiquated originals, but new phases of the same, better adapted to the increased knowledge, sharpened acumen, and advanced civilisation of the times in which we live; and framed with all the adroitness and skill of Satan himself, for the wide circulation and great work of the latter days. *No! mankind at large have not improved!* The tendency of the human family, as such, has not been—is not—to that which is good, but the reverse. The tares have not been uprooted, nor have they lost ground, but they have multiplied, more, we believe, proportionably than the wheat; and they have ripened together—ripened in a *measure,* for the harvest is not yet; but it will come, and the ripening process will go forward till it come. As yet there is a hindrance, a letting power, which prevents the crisis. The tares are kept back; they flower abundantly; they bear fruit—first fruit—even as the wheat, but not in full. The hindrance will one day be removed, then

fruit will appear,—*evil* in all its intensity and entirety, in all its gigantic properties and proportions, will stand forth exhibited, uncovered, revealed in "THE MAN OF SIN!"

Dream not, then, of universal blessedness on earth, or anything approximating to it, during the present dispensation. Dream not of a state generally better, happier, holier, than that you witness at present. Things will grow worse, not better, till the advent day.

Grace during this dispensation has to do only with individuals, not with nations; only with persons, not with communities; it is here one and there one, and not the mass anywhere, that are sanctified and saved. The mass grow worse, and will do so to the end; and thus, as the end will be the maturity of the present, so is the present the earnest and type of the end: we see the predicted prospect in the immediate foreshadow, the world as foretold at the last in the world as beheld now; bad it is to be, bad it is! The consummation yet to arrive is to be, as the Lord testifies, *evil;* the embryo exhibits itself, as our eyes witness, in all the odious and essential peculiarities of the consummation! Was it not well said, was it not kindly said for our admonition and salvation—mark it well! "My disciples are not of this world, even as I am not of this world?"

But, further, notice—have we not even the very types, not only of prospects generally, but of persons particularly [the very persons who shall be so distinguished in the latter days] before and among us now? Have we not many antichrists, and some witnesses?—many

playing the part of the former, some playing the part of the latter, around and among us now?—many who, by word and deed, by book and letter, by effort and influence, by theory and practice, are opposing Christ, hindering godliness, supporting ungodliness, vindicating folly, commending vanity, perverting truth, and ruining souls? *Are not these antichrists?* the very spirit, and substance, and evil, and essence of antichrist? Of him, and belonging to him, foreshadowing him, and preparing the way for him—preludes, types, messengers, and ministers of him, and nothing else? And some, God be praised! some precisely the reverse —opposing, hating, resisting, testifying against these principles, maintaining to the uttermost the Lord's cause, and extending to the uttermost the Lord's kingdom. And *are not these witnesses?* "Ye are my witnesses," saith the Lord of hosts! And they are his witnesses, in spirit and truth, even as those to come, foreshadowing them, and keeping open the way, as it were, for their appearance! Yes, coming persons, as well as coming events, cast their shadows before them. Antichrist and the witnesses are to come; and antichrists many, and witnesses some, even now there are! *But what are we?* What, I ask, solemnly, pointedly, —What are we? To which class do we belong? Which of the coming men do we foreshadow? Are *we* antichrists, or witnesses? One or other we must be, there is no escape; "He that is not with me is against me;" he that witnesseth not for me, therefore, contends against me! So it is in every case, in your case and mine; and one or other of these we must be. We are

—*Which is it?* Settle it now, it must be settled some day, and on the settlement of it depends, whether our lot be at last with antichrist, in the lake of "fire," or with the witnesses before the throne, to shine, as they shall shine, in the firmament of heaven for ever!

Ah! blessed Lord, search us and try us, and shew us what we are, and of what spirit; and give us thine own Spirit, and make us valiant for truth, and strong in the Lord and the power of His might; that we may glory in the cause and cross of Christ, and bear witness for Him, through evil report and good report, regardless alike of fear or favour; so that nothing may move us, neither that we may count our lives dear unto us, but that our care and concern may be, so to "testify the gospel of the grace of God," that Christ may be magnified whether by life or by death; and subordinate to that, that we may inherit the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that "are faithful unto death." (Rev. ii. 10.)

The following extracts (for which I am indebted to Maitland's Apostolic School, &c.) from the writings of the earliest Fathers in support of the individual humanity of antichrist, are equally available, as far as they go, in support of the *literal* principle of interpretation generally, as opposed to the *historical*:—

Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, himself the disciple of St John, and therefore probably acquainted

with John's own view, thus writes about the year A.D. 180 :—

"From what is said of the times of antichrist, it appears that he, being an apostate and a robber, will desire to be worshipped as God, and though a slave, will seek to be proclaimed a king. Receiving all the power of the Devil, he will come, not as a just and lawful sovereign subject to God, but as impious, unjust, and without law ; as an apostate, a wicked one, and a murderer ; as a robber, summing up in himself the diabolical apostasy. Putting away idols to persuade man that he is God, he will set up himself as sole idol, combining in himself the manifold errors of all other idols. He will sit in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. I have proved in the third book that the Apostles call no one God, in his proper person, excepting him who is God indeed, the Father of our Lord : by whose command, for reasons already given, the temple in Jerusalem was built. In this temple the adversary will sit, striving to show himself to be the Christ ; as the Lord also says, 'when ye shall see the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel, the prophet, standing in the holy place :' And when this antichrist shall have laid waste all things in the world, reigning three years and six months, and sitting in the temple of Jerusalem, then the Lord shall come from heaven in clouds, in the glory of the Father : and casting him, and those that obey him into the lake of fire, will bring about to the just the times of the kingdom ; that is, the rest, even the seventh day made holy. And He will restore to Abraham the promise of the inheritance ; in which kingdom, saith the Lord, 'many shall come from the east and from the west, and shall sit down with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.'"

Tertullian wrote as follows, about the year A.D. 190 or 200 :—

"O my people, enter into thy closets for a little season, until my wrath be past. The graves will be those closets, in which they who in the end of the world, and in the last indignation,

shall suffer by the violence of antichrist, will have to rest a little season, until my indignation, which shall extinguish antichrist, shall be past. After that indignation, He shows that the flesh shall come out of that sepulchre, in which, before the indignation, it had been laid. For out of closets nothing can be taken but what was before put in, and after the extirpation of antichrist will follow the resurrection.

"Enoch and Elias are translated: their death is found, being delayed. Yet they are reserved to die, that with their blood they may extinguish antichrist."

Victorinus, about A.D. 290, thus:—

"The false prophet will cause a golden image to be set up to antichrist in the temple of Jerusalem; and into this image the vagabond angel will enter, emitting voices and oracles. He will also cause both bond and free to receive a mark in their foreheads, or on their right hand, even the number of his name, that none may buy or sell without it. Now Daniel had foretold this abomination and provocation, saying, 'He will set up his temple in Samaria, [or between the seas, *inter maria*, as suggested by Malvenda,] upon the glorious and holy mountain;' that is, he will then set up in Jerusalem an image, such as Nebuchadnezzar made. This the Lord explains, admonishing His churches against the last times and dangers; saying, 'When ye shall see the abomination spoken of by Daniel, the prophet, standing in the holy place.'"

Hilary, Bishop of Poictiers, wrote about A.D. 350, thus:—

"When they shall see the abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, then let them understand the return of daylight. And on this subject, after what the blessed Daniel and Paul have written, I think it needless for me to speak; for this refers to the time of antichrist. He is called an abomination, because, coming in opposition to God, he will arrogate to himself divine honour: and, of desolation, because he will wickedly

desolate the earth with war and slaughter. He will also be received by the Jews into the holy place : and where God has been invoked by the prayers of the saints, there will antichrist, received by the faithless, be worshipped with divine honour."

Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, wrote about A.D. 360, as follows :—

"When the true Christ is about to come the second time, the Adversary, taking advantage of the expectation of simple persons, especially those of the circumcision, will produce a certain magician, deeply skilled in the treacherous and wicked arts of spells and incantations. This man will usurp the government of the Roman empire, and will falsely call himself the Christ. By this title he will deceive the Jews, who still expect the Anointed One ; while, by his magic arts and delusions, he will draw after him the Gentiles."

Chrysostom, about A.D. 390 :-

"He is called a son of perdition, because he himself will perish. And who is he? Satan? By no means ; but a certain man, receiving all the operation of Satan. There shall be revealed, it says, the man, who will be extolled above all that is called God, or that is made an object of worship. For he will not incite men to worship idols, but will be himself an Antitheos. He will put down all gods, and will command men to worship him as the very God. And he will sit in the temple of God ; not only that which is in Jerusalem, but in the churches everywhere."

Jerome, about A.D. 407, thus writes :—

"But instantly, as He (the Lord Jesus Christ) appears, antichrist will be slain ; and as the shadows flee at the rising of the sun, so, by the brightness of His coming, will the Lord destroy and blot him out. For his works are the works of Satan ; and as in Christ there dwelt bodily the fulness of the Godhead, so

also there will in antichrist all powers, and signs, and wonders, and all lying. For, as the magicians, by their lies, resisted God's miracles which He wrought by Moses, and Moses's rod swallowed up their rods, so will the truth of Christ swallow up the lie of antichrist. But his falsehood will deceive those who have been already prepared for destruction."

LECTURE IV.

ISRAEL'S TROUBLE—THE BATTLE OF ARMAGEDDON.

"FOR THEY ARE THE SPIRITS OF DEVILS, WORKING MIRACLES, *WHICH* GO FORTH UNTO THE KINGS OF THE EARTH AND OF THE WHOLE WORLD, TO GATHER THEM TO THE BATTLE OF THAT GREAT DAY OF GOD ALMIGHTY."—Revelation xvi. 14.

"WHEN ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars," saith our Lord, speaking in reference to the latter times, "When ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled; for *such things* must needs be; but the end *shall* not *be* yet!" So, wars, and rumours of wars, must needs be heard of yet, yea, even unto the end! And not only heard of, but verified in fact, acted out in terrible reality; wars, of an intensity, both as to character and degree, hitherto unprecedented; wars, of which the world's history presents as yet no parallel. *War in perfection is yet to come;* war, instigated by the deadliest motives of which fallen humanity, energized by Satan, is capable; and

waged on the most scientific principles which human ingenuity, sharpened by the same supernatural power, can originate. Yes, science has yet to do its part in the work of human destruction, yet to be virtually among the great executioners of the human race.

But men dream and tell of peace, even universal peace! Peace, too, as the result of science! For science, say they, is the parent of civilization, and civilization the handmaid, yea, the destined author of universal peace. Wondrous delusion! as all, who read and believe their Bible, must know full well; and as all, indeed, who (whether they read or believe the Bible or no) are observers of passing events, must also, one would think, know full well; for what, I would ask, is the particular end to which science is now directed? To what purpose is it now, even at the present moment, most particularly, and successfully applied? Is it to railway improvement, electric and telegraphic despatch, steamboat navigation? Is it to matters merely of general civilization, and peaceful industry? Or is it not, as an unquestionable fact, to the improvement of the art of war—to the munitions, and implements, and materials of war? What do we read of in our daily periodicals? To what is our attention called in endless advertisements, but to new discoveries purporting to double and redouble, yea, increase to an incalculable amount, the terrible efficiency, and destructive power, of such instrumentality in all its varied forms! This is what science is doing, and vaunted to do, in the present day.

Peace from science! no: the science of this world is an unsanctified science; and unsanctified science,

like all else, the product of unsanctified intelligence, is power, not for good, but for evil: not "to save men's lives," but "to destroy them." So it has been, so it is, and so it will be. "Overturn, overturn, overturn," till He comes, whose it shall be "to restore and build up;" till He comes—the Prince of peace—"who will make wars to cease unto the end of the earth;" then there shall be peace indeed: then science shall be dissevered from war, for men "shall *learn* war no more," and peace, even universal peace, shall prevail; for "the knowledge of the glory of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." But this, not yet;—oh! no; not yet! As yet, "wars and rumours of wars," and, worst of all wars, that in my text—"the battle of the great day of God Almighty!" This has yet to be fought, and to this, with what it immediately involves, I purpose now, the Lord helping me, to direct your attention.

It is in connection with Israel's prospective history, you will remember, that we are considering the events of the latter days. The battle of Armageddon is closely connected with that history; so much so indeed, as that it involves, and constitutes mainly, what is emphatically denominated "the time of Jacob's trouble," or the "great tribulation" through which Israel is destined to pass. To explain this connection, as well as describe the battle itself, in reference to certain particulars, is the design of this lecture.

According to our last lecture, the Man of sin, and the Witnesses, had appeared on the stage. The history of the witnesses was considered, and closed in their death, resurrection, and ascension. Their end is

supposed to occur towards the termination of the last three years and a half of antichrist's power and reign, and, therefore, closely in connection with the battle of Armageddon; but whether previous to its actual commencement, or during the strife itself, I presume not to say. Now, however, is the time for the battle: during these three and a half years, or the latter portion of them, the preparation has been going on for "gathering the nations against Jerusalem," and there we are now to suppose their presence, antichrist himself at their head. I proceed—

I. To explain the Connection between the Battle, and Israel's Tribulation.

In Israel's history, amidst the varied and chequered circumstances by which it is characterized, there are three leading particulars which stand out in strong relief, and are of peculiar moment. These are—her *sin*, her *punishment*, and her *deliverance*.

Israel's *sin*—originally consisting, as shown in a former lecture, in wilful disobedience to God, and resolute and persevering contempt of His mercies, no less than His commandments—plunged them at last, by God's judicial permission, into a state of complete blindness, and hardness of heart; so that they rejected and crucified the Lord of Life, and then set the seal to their evil and desperate case, by resisting the influence of the Spirit sent down from on high, and perpetrating the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. This was the consummation of their iniquity; the filling up the measure to the full; the climax, which brought upon them the

sentence of "wrath to the uttermost," and leaves them even now exposed to its predicted execution, with overwhelming fury, in the latter day. For the days of vengeance have not closed, "the end is not yet." They began, and terrible was the beginning, in the siege under Titus, when Jerusalem was sacked, her temple razed to the ground, and her people scattered over the face of the globe; but that was only their beginning; still do those days run on; and the tide of desolation and woe, which then set in, was destined to hold its onward and unhindered flood, for ages and generations, until it should ingulf its victims in an ocean of tribulation, such as never before was, and never again shall be, while the world stands.

Now that tribulation will immediately precede the advent of our Lord, as he Himself testifies, "Immediately after the tribulation of those days . . . . shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory;" (Matt. xxiv. 29, 30;) and thus it precisely synchronizes with the battle of Armageddon, for this also shall immediately precede the advent, as the verse before my text intimates, and as is still more explicitly stated in Zechariah xxiv. 2–4, where, after the announcement and description of the siege, it is added, "Then shall the LORD go forth and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And His feet shall stand in that day on the Mount of Olives." The battle, then, and the tribulation are identical as to time, they are therefore identical also as to fact; for, since the time of Israel's tribulation, is also the

time of Israel being besieged, the tribulation and siege must, of course, be one and the same thing; upon this point no question can exist.

This connection or identity, however, between the tribulation and the battle is seen, if not in a clearer, yet in a more interesting point of view, if we call to mind the part antichrist has to play in this battle, and his distinct office, in relation to Israel at that day. Antichrist is revealed as God's special agent for the chastisement of Israel; and Armageddon the school, where that chastisement is to be administered. Antichrist, be it remembered, at his first appearance in the land, is welcomed by Israel; he makes a covenant with Israel at the beginning of the week, or seven years of his power, (Dan. ix. 27,) and by flatteries and delusions, miracle-working and lying wonders, induces the belief that he is the long-expected Messiah.

Thus, as already noticed, was it foretold by our Lord himself in that remarkable prediction, "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." (John v. 43.) Christ they would not have; the humble, lowly-minded Jesus they would not receive. "We will not have this man to reign over us;" "away with him, away with him," was their cry! A king, a manifested king! A mighty one on the earth, who should invest them again with more than their pristine grandeur and glory—such a one they would have; and when, according to their expectation and belief, such a one comes, him they will have! "*Him ye will receive!*" And he does come;

"behold the man," not of God! no, but of Satan! not the Christ! no, but the antichrist! He does come—come in the character, come with the power, come with the promise, they desire and demand, "with power, and signs, and lying wonders," and "him they do receive."—And what then? What follows, what must follow, in God's righteous purpose, righteous indignation, then? What? Why, that he should be their scourge! They have chosen a king after their own mind; that king shall scourge them after God's mind; "The wicked are God's sword;" "The wrath of man shall praise him, the remainder of wrath will he restrain."

Has it not ever been so? Have not the wicked, the wicked in their wrath, the mighty wicked, ever been employed to answer God's purpose, and especially the purpose of chastising his people? What are we told of Pharaoh, and Sennacherib, of Shalmaneser, and Nebuchadnezzar, and what are we told of Antichrist yet to come—of whom they, in the plenitude of their power, were but types and shadows—what of Antichrist? Let the Lord himself inform us; "O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger, and the staff in thine hand is mine indignation. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire in the streets." Here is God's purpose, and here is the consequence of Israel's choice. Neither doubt for a moment whether antichrist and this Assyrian are one and the same; say not it is Nebuchadnezzar, or Sennacherib, or any one else but

antichrist who is here introduced, for mark what follows in the twelfth verse: "Wherefore it shall come to pass, that when the Lord hath performed His whole work upon Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks." Now, I ask, has the Lord yet, *ever yet*, finished His whole work upon Mount Zion, and in Jerusalem? Unquestionably not; but it is when He shall have finished His whole work, that the Assyrian meets his doom: clearly, therefore, this Assyrian is no one that has yet appeared, and as clearly also must he be *that one* who is to appear at the very time when God shall perform all His work in Jerusalem; and who, at the end thereof, himself, as it is specially revealed, meets his doom in the lake of fire which burneth with brimstone. (Rev. xix. 20.) Observe also, Ezekiel xxxviii. 14, 15: "Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord God; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: and thou shalt come up against my people of Israel as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land." These passages are sufficient to show the purpose for which this army, headed by the Assyrian, the antichrist, is commissioned by God against Israel in the latter days. And so far you perceive clearly, I trust, the connection between Israel's trouble and the battle of Armaged-

don, that they are identical, not only in point of time, but fact; that they are the same thing, the battle of Armageddon being itself the closing act of Israel's trouble.

This brings us to the consideration of

II. THE BATTLE ITSELF.

The battle is plainly predicted in several passages of Scripture, as well as the text. Ezekiel xxxviii. 14, 15, just quoted, evidently refers to it. The following passages also foretell it, in significant and appalling terms:—"Blow ye the trumpet in the land: cry, gather together, and say, Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities. Set up the standard towards Zion: retire, stay not: for I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction. The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; and thy cities shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant." (Jer. iv. 5–7.) "Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for *it is* nigh at hand." And then follows a long and dread description of the besieging army, which probably refers to the event before us. (Joel ii. 1.) "Behold, the day of the Lord cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee. For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken." (Zech. xiv. 1, 2.) That these predictions all refer to the same battle seems certain, from their contexts respectively; for

they are in each case represented as occurring in the latter days, or in close connection with the advent; and the identity in point of time establishes also the identity as to the event.

A difficulty, however, is felt by some in distinguishing between this battle, and others made mention of in Scripture. For instance, a battle or siege is predicted in Deut. xxviii.; also, one in Luke xxi. 20; but this is universally allowed to be the same with that predicted in Deut. xxviii. Again, another battle is predicted in Revelation xx. 8, 9, to occur at the *close* of the Millennium. And there is the battle in my text. Now the battle predicted in Deuteronomy and Luke, is certainly the siege of Jerusalem under Titus, and cannot be confounded with that to occur at the *close* of the Millennium, foretold in Revelation xx.; the distinction between these is perfectly evident. But the question is, whether the battle foretold in my text, now under consideration, is not identical with one or other of these, or whether it is distinct from and unconnected with both. A few words will, I think, settle this point, and establish, beyond question, that it is thus distinct.

That it is distinct from the siege under Titus appears from this—at this siege Titus was completely victorious, and Israel completely vanquished and dispersed, even to the present day; while at Armageddon, on the contrary, though the enemy of Israel may conquer for a moment, (as appears from Zechariah xiv. 2,) yet it shall be *only* for a moment, the LORD quickly appears to fight for Israel, and the enemy then is utterly destroyed. Nothing can be more de-

cisive or absolute than the distinction here. In one case the *besiegers* are conquerors, in the other the *besieged!* In one case the interposition of the LORD, in a providential form, is wholly *against* Israel; in the other the interposition of the LORD, in a personal form, is wholly in Israel's *favour*—to confound these is manifestly impossible.

Again, that the battle in my text is distinct from that foretold in Revelation xx. is just as clear; for the nations here, we are told, come up against the camp of the saints—of the *saints*, mark! the camp of the saints! But will Jerusalem, as encompassed by nations under antichrist (the siege in my text), be the camp of *saints?* Verily, it will be the camp of unconverted, unbelieving Israelites! gathered in anger, and gathered for chastisement. This, surely, is enough to distinguish between these sieges; or if more be wanting in proof, it is readily furnished. We are told, then, concerning the battle in Revelation xx. that at its close, the devil was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the *beast* and the false prophet *are.* But at the siege in my text, the *beast* is at the head of the army of nations, commissioned there by God as the scourge of Israel; nor is he disposed of till the siege is closed, and the LORD Himself has made His appearance. Clearly, then, this battle of Armageddon is quite distinct from that in Revelation xx., as much so as it is from that in Deuteronomy xxviii. and Luke xxi.

The particular moment of time, too, when Armageddon is predicted to occur, is very remarkable, as contrasted with both these other battles. Unlike the

siege under Titus, it occurs, not at the *beginning*, but at the *end* of Israel's tribulation; while, unlike the siege in Rev. xx. it occurs, not at the *end* but at the *beginning* of the millennial age. It occurs, in short, just between the other two, and at that particular point of time when Israel's trouble closes, and the time of blessedness is about to begin.

In regard to this battle it must be further noticed, that it is, when fully viewed, divisible into two parts, or acts. The *first* relates to the assault of antichrist and the nations, on Israel at Jerusalem: the *second* to the assault of Christ, and the host of heaven, on antichrist and the nations. The *first* to antichrist and the nations, conquering Israel and Jerusalem; the *second* to Christ and the host of heaven, conquering antichrist and the nations. These parts or acts, essentially distinct as they are, are often confounded, and great perplexity and error in the interpretation of prophecy are the result; though, indeed, such confusion is not greatly to be wondered at, inasmuch as these parts are brought into such close juxtaposition in Scripture, and are, in fact, so nearly allied, following each other in such rapid succession, that when viewed in a cursory way, or, as it were, at a distance, they seem but one; though upon a closer inspection, and careful examination, the distinction between them is, as just shown, decided in the extreme, and palpable as possible.

This distinction is well deserving of notice, because of its important bearing on the church of Christ generally, as well as on Israel in particular.

The church is intensely concerned in it: for in

the *first* act she is to be a sufferer; in the *second* act a conqueror! In a greater or less degree she is destined to pass through the tribulation of the *first*; from that of the *second* she is absolutely exempt—far above out of the way of it, with her Lord in glory! Unless this distinction between these acts be observed, the church's prospects cannot be understood: and hence, indeed, the difficulty that is felt on this particular point. It is not unfrequently asked, '*How is the church to pass through great tribulation, as we are told, if she is to escape the things that are coming on the earth?*' (Luke xxi. 36.) On the other hand, '*How is she to escape those things, as we are told, if she is to pass through such tribulation?*' (Rev. vii. 14.) The distinction, above explained, at once settles the question, and ends the difficulty. There are *two* acts in the battle, and *two* great tribulations; the *first* under antichrist, when he is conqueror, through which the church does pass; the *second* under Christ, when He is conqueror, through which the church does not pass. The *first* occurs prior to the advent, when the church is on earth, and exposed to all that may happen; the *second* occurs after the advent, when the church has been caught up, and is in glory, and exposed to nothing that can happen. The explanation is thus simple, and the church's prospect, fearful enough on the one hand, and glorious enough on the other, is clearly apparent.

Our business, now, however, is with the first act of the battle, *antichrist's assault upon Jerusalem*, which

is also "Jacob's trouble." Let us notice the following particulars:—

1. The immediate cause of the siege or Battle.

Let everything be traced to God. Positively, or permissively, God is the cause of everything; for everything is destined to do His work, and accomplish His end. And thus in the matter before us. God has great ends to be accomplished in and by this battle, ends clearly predicted and revealed; and in these is the cause of the battle to be originally seen, as well as precisely understood.

God's ends and objects here are very momentous; far different, indeed, from those which the actors and agents in the strife themselves contemplate. In the first place, the battle, with its accompaniments, is intended for the chastisement of Israel, and for vengeance too! Yes, vengeance on Israel, as well as gracious salutary chastisement. It is even in their case for destruction, as well as purification! Many in Israel will perish at that day. "It shall come to pass, *saith the Lord, that in all the land,* two parts therein shall be cut off *and* die! but the third part shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried." (Zech. xiii. 8, 9.) The third part only are spared, purified, and brought through the fire; but as for the rest, alas! they evidently perish in the siege, and in the accompanying and surrounding tribulation. In Ezekiel, also, xxii. 18–22, as noticed in the second lecture, we have God's object in this matter clearly revealed:—

"Son of man, the house of Israel is to me become dross; all they are brass, and tin, and iron, and lead, in the midst of the furnace; they are *even* the dross of silver. Therefore thus saith the LORD GOD; Because ye are all become dross, behold, therefore, I will gather you into the midst of Jerusalem. As they gather silver, and brass, and iron, and lead, and tin, in the midst of the furnace, to blow the fire upon it, to melt it; so will I gather *you* in mine anger and in my fury, and I will leave you there, and melt you. Yea, I will gather you and blow upon you in the fire of my wrath, and ye shall be melted in the midst thereof. As silver is melted in the midst of the furnace, so shall ye be melted in the midst thereof; and ye shall know that I the LORD have poured out my fury upon you." The battle will be the furnace, Armageddon the fining-pot, into which Israel shall be cast, and where the fire shall be blown upon them: many shall not endure to the end, many shall perish, the rest shall be purified, perfectly, no doubt, for God's work is perfect; but terrible will be the process.

Again, God has another object in the battle, even in reference to the nations who shall be gathered together and engaged therein. It is designed for their final destruction, as well as primarily for the chastisement and judgment of Israel. God employs the nations to do His work on Israel, and then terrible is the judgment He executes upon them. The word is clear and express on this point: "For, behold in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, *and* will plead with them there for my people and *for* my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land. . . . . Assemble yourselves and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about; thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD. Let the heathen be awakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat; for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe." (Joel iii. 1, 2, 11, 12.) "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey; for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, *even* all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." (Zeph. iii. 8.) "Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling to all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though all the people of the earth be gathered together against it." (Zech. xii. 2, 3.) And most terrible of all descriptions of the accomplishment of this object of the battle, is that in Rev. xix., when, at the close of the chapter, the invitation is given to all the fowls in the midst of heaven to come to the great gathering, and feed on the flesh of the host; and the final view is declared in the appalling terms: the beast and false prophet "were

cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

Such are God's objects in this battle: not so with antichrist and the nations. "Howbeit he meaneth not so, neither doth his heart think so; but *it is* in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not a few." His purpose is the gratification of savage revenge, and terrible destruction. "It is in his heart to destroy!" Probably desperate enmity against Israel now burns in his heart. Israel has by this time rejected his yoke, and refused any longer allegiance to him. They have discovered, probably in the setting up of "the abomination of desolation," if in nothing else, his true character, and the monstrous lie he has acted—that he is not the Messiah, the first-born of God, but the "son of perdition," the first-born of the father of lies! And all the hatred, and malignity, and revenge, which now, alas! actuate them against the true Christ, will then, with one accord, be transferred to the antichrist! "His heart is, therefore, to destroy!" Gain, too, will be in his mind. "I will give him charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey." (Isa. x. 6.) Also it is written concerning him, "It shall come to pass . . . . that thou shalt think an evil thought, and thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwalled villages . . . . to take a spoil and to take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places, *that are now* inhabited,

and upon the people *that are* gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land." So that "the spoil," and "the prey," as well as destruction, are in his heart, and are influential causes, on antichrist's part, of this great expedition.

Verily "he meaneth not so," as Christ meaneth, in that day; neither doth his heart think as Christ thinketh concerning it. But whose thought shall prevail, whose purpose shall stand, we know. If never before, *then* at least shall it appear that the Lord He is the God,—that the Lord He is the God; and that though the heart of man—even the man of sin—may devise his way, it is GOD who directeth his paths, and by those paths accomplisheth His own will.

2. The preparation for the Battle.

On antichrist's part, the preparation, as noticed at the close of the second lecture, is clearly revealed in my text, and preceding verse,—"And I saw three unclean spirits, like frogs, *come* out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." This is antichrist's, and his great energizer's the devil's, preparation for the battle. Judge what will be the character of the assembled host,—what the disposition and tendencies, actings and object of the besiegers, schooled by such teachers, led on by such captains! Alas! for Israel when delivered up, as

she shall be for a season, into their hands! No marvel that her trouble will be "great," even unequalled before or since.

And on God's part, what the preparation? The preaching of the gospel, as also noticed in lecture second, and as evidently implied in the prophetic announcement—"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." So that the nations that are gathered, are the nations to which the gospel has been previously preached as a witness; and the rejection of that gospel has proved the moral preparation—"the savour of death unto death"—which fits them for the part they shall play in the deadly strife of Armageddon in the first instance, and the portion they shall receive in the deadly "valley of decision" in the second.

Again, God's preparation for the battle extends even to warning Israel of its coming, and bidding them make ready for the enemy. Remember this remarkable passage,—"Declare ye in Judah, and publish in Jerusalem; and say, Blow ye the trumpet in the land; cry, gather together, and say, Assemble yourselves, and let us go into the defenced cities. Set up the standard toward Zion; retire, stay not; for I will bring evil from the north, and a great destruction. The lion is come up from his thicket, and the destroyer of the Gentiles is on his way; he is gone forth from his place to make thy land desolate; *and* thy cities shall be laid waste without an inhabitant." The following verses, and the remainder of the chapter throughout, plainly show that the call to prepare relates to this

great battle, the time of terrible desolation in the land; and, however heeded or not by Israel, is certainly to be included in God's preparation for the same.

Again, God's preparation includes the sealing of the remnant among Israel, "the third part," who shall be spared, and brought through the fire. To this Rev. vii. seems clearly to refer, where, just previous to the sounding of the seven trumpets, which doubtless refer to this battle and its time, we have the sealing, in order to their preservation through the coming trials, of the 144,000 of all the tribes of Israel. Nor must we omit the great multitude of whom it is said, "These are they which came out of great tribulation," for they, as I believe, and shall show hereafter, are saved by means of it; and if so, are doubtless, together with the 144,000 of Israel, sealed preparatory to it.

Vast, then, are the preparations made by God, as well as antichrist, for the great day of God Almighty; and is not the cause worthy?

3. The Intensity of the Siege, and Israel's Trouble.

This, we believe, admits of no description. It is to surpass everything of the kind the world has ever known before, or ever shall know again. No precedent exists, no parallel is furnished in bygone ages to aid our investigation, or throw light on the subject. It stands alone in history,—history past and future. It is once to occur, and but once,—*The Battle, The Great Day of God Almighty,*—and will concentrate in itself all that can be comprehended in that truly solemn and significant expression. Of every battle it

may be said, "it is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood;" but of this it shall be said, "it is with burning and fuel of fire." The terrible desolation and distress predicted in Deuteronomy xxviii., and realized already in no light measure in the siege under Titus, will, we believe, at Armageddon receive their perfect fulfilment; in kind, peradventure the same, in degree, how different! It was but by one or another,—rare at most the instances,—in the former siege, as historians tell us, that the monstrous and horrible thing was done in the city, of parents devouring their children's flesh; and yet the language of Deuteronomy xxviii. 53, &c., would seem to imply a practice, if not common, yet by no means infrequent at the time and occasion, whatever it be particularly referred to. How reasonable to suppose, how much more than probable, that the time and occasion finally referred to are those before us,—the time of "Jacob's trouble," the occasion of the battle of Armageddon,—the time when judgment shall begin at the house of God, the occasion when "tribulation" shall sweep that house, such as was not since the beginning of the world to that time, nor ever shall be again.

Be this, however, as it may, the description in Joel, and the declaration of Christ Himself, reiterating Daniel's prediction, (chap. xii. 1,) are quite sufficient to determine the character of this appalling event, and to warrant all that the liveliest imagination can conceive, of the intensity of suffering which shall then be endured. Well can we believe that, "except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved;" but for the elects' sake those days shall be

shortened; and yet not so shortened, it may be, as to diminish the amount, or reduce the sum total of suffering, but only to reduce it within a narrower compass, and so curtail the duration,—shorten the period by condensing the substance; *for it must be borne;* Israel must receive, even at the hand of the Lord, and by the Lord's appointed instrument, "double for her sins." (Isa. xl. 2.) Then, but not till then, shall it be proclaimed to her that "her warfare is accomplished, and her iniquity pardoned."

4. The immediate results of the Battle.

These, of course, will precisely accord with God's purposes in permitting the battle, which we have already noticed; the results will show the fulfilment of those purposes, and will therefore be,

First: A terrible destruction of many of Israel in the city and in the land, even two-thirds of the whole. "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die, but the third part shall be left therein." (Zech. xiii. 8.)

Secondly: The deep humiliation, repentance, and purification of the remnant, or the "one-third," who are spared and brought through the fire; and who receive the Lord at His coming with joy and gladness, and are subsequently, as will appear in a future lecture, commissioned to go forth and proclaim His fame and glory to the isles and nations afar off. (Isa. lxvi.)

Thirdly: Supreme self-exaltation, and pride to the uttermost, on the part of antichrist! Flushed with victory—for victory for the moment is his—(Zech.

xiv. 2,) he will arrogate to himself more than ever, what the nations will readily concede, the power and supremacy and glory of God—Jerusalem captured; "defenced cities laid in ruinous heaps;" Israel conquered; the world at his feet; what, what to induce the relinquishment of the blasphemous claim already preferred, the daring title already assumed! Or what to deter the universal acknowledgment, or stifle the acclamation, by the victorious host he commands, that he is King of kings, and Lord of lords! "It is the voice of a god, and not of a man," said they, when Herod, clad in royal robes, made an oration! What of antichrist then, in this his day of signal but final, triumph? The shout of the world's assembly will, we verily believe, be nothing less than, "There is no God but antichrist, and antichrist is God!" But, O God! Thou knowest, and Thou hast said, what shall be the end thereof; "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand; that I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot; then shall his yoke depart from off them; and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth, and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?" Yes! *Who shall turn it back?* A short work will the Lord God then make on the earth; let them look to it—antichrist and his band; there is but a step between that shout of blasphemous triumph and the depths of

the nethermost hell! A moment more, and they shall be given—and none shall help them—as chaff to the wind, and stubble to the everlasting burning.

Fourthly: The salvation of the great multitude, to which I alluded among the causes of the Battle, and which I believe will be saved by means of the tribulation connected therewith. For the tribulation, though centering in Judea, will probably extend itself far beyond, and bring within its range multitudes in Christendom generally. The beast "has power over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations;" and all who refuse to worship his image, and bow down to him, he causes to be put to death. (Rev. xiii. 7, 15.) And doubtless the number who suffer will be great, and doubtless also that number, great as it may be, who do so suffer, and suffer as they then do for Christ's sake, shall be included among the number of the saved, and glorified together with the Lord.

Now just such a multitude—a multitude saved through terrible suffering, and saved at this particular time—is brought to view in Revelation vii. It is specifically declared of the great multitude, mentioned in verse 9, who "stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palms in their hands,"—signifying, plainly, of course, their salvation—that "they came out of great tribulation," or, as it ought correctly to be rendered, "*the* tribulation, *the great one*," assigning this tribulation as the occasion, or instrumental cause, of their salvation; but this great tribulation is identical with the great tribulation of "Jacob's trouble," and "the battle of Armageddon," for there is no other "great tribulation" prior to the

advent; and hence it follows, that this multitude cannot be understood of the church generally, in all ages, but particularly and exclusively of that portion of it which shall exist, or possibly even come into existence, at that momentous period—*that portion of it* which it is said shall be waited for at the last, (Rev. vi. 11,) which therefore we suppose will be the last added to the church, and actually accomplish the number of the elect; and which, therefore, must be regarded as a result, blessed and gracious indeed, of the battle of Armageddon, and the great tribulation it will involve.

Such, we believe, will be found to be, substantially at least, the immediate results of the battle of Armageddon, and the "great tribulation;" and these prepare the way for the "coming of the Son of man in the glory of his Father,"—the Deliverer of Israel, and Destroyer of Antichrist. This glorious subject awaits our consideration in the next lecture. In the mean time bear in mind the point in prophetic history at which we stand —The battle of Armageddon in its first act is closed; antichrist and the nations have taken the city; two parts of Israel in the land are destroyed; the third part spared, but in terrible distress, in the enemy's power, exposed to terrible atrocities, (Zech. xiv. 2,) and anxiously looking for help and deliverance. Also multitudes of all nations, slain for Christ's sake during the tribulation, ready, with the rest of the saints, whether living or dead, to meet the Lord when He comes, and together with Him to execute judgment on apostate Christendom. This is the point at which

we stand, and here we close for the present with a few brief remarks.

1. Let these things be seen in their true light, and have their full weight. They are not fables—cunningly-devised fables. Into whose mind would it enter to devise such fables? Who would willingly anticipate such prospects as these, and voluntarily create them? The imagination follows the *will*, and is governed, if not actually originated, by it. We invent what we *like*, especially when the invention is supposed to determine the character and reality of our own prospects. The heart, then, as a rule, governs the head. We prophesy not willingly of terrible sufferings, dread persecutions, and the like; but bright scenes, unmixed prosperity, a golden age, millennial bliss — these are the subject-matter of our speculations, and the landscapes we create and finish off for ourselves. Not so, however, the Word of God! not such the prospects it unfolds, the subjects just contemplated. Terrible tribulation; evil ripening up into its climax; woe unprecedented! These are the subjects we have considered, these the prospects the Word of God unmistakeably foretells? *These* cannot be fables, but realities—stern realities—not phantasies, conjured up by man, who dreads and quails in view of them, but coming facts, announced by God, who in righteous judgment permits and ordains them: and as such, it is well that we regard them, that having them ever in view, we may be ready for them when they come—and *come they will!* God alone knows how soon!

2. Not only must these things come, but they will

come next in the world's prophetic history; they will come before the advent of our Lord, and they are the only things that, of prophetical necessity, must so come. They lie, and alone lie, in the chart between the present moment and that glorious event. We have nothing to expect but these things before the Lord shall come, but we cannot expect the Lord till the accomplishment of these things. If it be objected that in thus speaking, that in interposing any event as necessarily to happen before the advent, we virtually nullify the exhortation "*to be ready at any moment*"—our reply is, that we interpose nothing but what the Lord has Himself interposed, either orally or at the mouth of Paul. For instance, in Matthew xxiv. the Lord explicitly predicts His advent as "immediately after the tribulation," that tribulation being, as verse 21 teaches, "the great tribulation." He thus interposes that tribulation between the days that then were and His advent; and inasmuch as that "great tribulation" has not yet been visited on the world, it remains of necessity yet to come to pass, and of necessity, too, to be interposed between the present time and the coming of the Lord. Again, Paul, in 2 Thessalonians ii. 3, declares that the coming of our Lord, and our gathering together unto Him, shall not happen "except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." He, therefore, interposes the revelation of the man of sin between his days and the advent; and as the man of sin has not yet appeared, he remains of necessity also to come, and his appearance of necessity, also, to be interposed between the present time and the advent of Christ. So, then,

we interpose nothing but what Scripture itself interposes; God forbid! All we say is, that the revelation of antichrist, and the great tribulation, with its immediately-attendant circumstances, the gathering of the nations and the battle of Armageddon, must precede the advent; and this we say because, and only because, Scripture says the same; and that these things, therefore, lie between us and that glorious event. It may require no long period, as we have seen, for the accomplishment of what these imply; in these days of rapid transit a few months even would suffice for the partial restoration of Israel, and with that for the revelation of the man of sin: he might be manifested at any moment, and then at most a few years—Daniel's hebdomad, or seven years—and the whole would be consummated.

There is nothing, therefore, on the principle we advocate, to prevent the witnessing of the whole of the time of the end even on our own part, or to forbid our beholding the Lord himself coming in the clouds of heaven! Nothing, certainly, to prevent our being called to pass through, or to realize, whatever may be the church's (as distinct from Israel's) share of the great tribulation. For *that*, at all events, we ought to be ready; for *that*, by all manner of means, let us be ready; it is, together with the revelation of antichrist, the almost immediate prospect now before us. Dream not of anything else; dream not of millennial bliss apart from or before this—dream not of being caught up to meet the Lord, and to escape this; the church will escape the wrath poured out by Christ, not the cruelty and persecution of antichrist—dream not of

anything in the way of general blessedness to the earth or to the church prior to this! *No such thing!* Sin and iniquity, increasing and maturing till they ripen into antichrist! trouble and groaning, till they resolve themselves into the great tribulation! This is the prospect—the history onward for the present; so God teaches plainly in His Word, and so He teaches plainly, as it would seem, in His providence too—witness, for instance, the history of the Great Exhibition in its results. In man's wisdom and judgment, this was to be the very guarantee for peace, the bond of an inviolable union between all nations! And yet, scarcely had it closed—not as many months, at least, as were required to build it—but we see the world bristling with arms, and the nations in the attitude of bold and suspicious defiance! Peace — universal Peace! No; come what may of the Exhibition, it will not be peace —universal peace. We call not in question its object or its result—the legitimacy of the one, or utility, in certain respects, of the other. Science may be developed, industry stimulated, comfort and convenience of social and individual existence subserved, but as to peace, universal peace, an earthly millennium, resulting from that gorgeous spectacle, as well, I believe, look for heaven to be scaled by a Tower of Babel! Success is as likely to crown the expectation in one case as the other. No! Peace, universal peace, millennial bliss, is God's work; and will emanate—not from grand human exhibitions, or mighty human exploits, daring or astounding as they may be—but from the coming and kingdom of Him who is Himself the Prince of peace, *and from nothing else.*

But there is a peace which, though also God's own work, is a peace for the present time, a blessed peace, "a peace which passeth all understanding," a peace which, in the midst of the world and all its sin and pollution, and all its warrings and turmoils, may be realized; and which, at the cost of the world, and all its attractions and interests, all its honours and powers, ought to be secured—and that is, *peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ!* This peace, this precious peace, we may have; and, having it, we may look on without the shadow of apprehension, yea, with unwavering confidence, to all that is coming: for God being with us, who or what can be against us? God being on our side, why need we fear what man—even the "man of sin" himself—can do against us? But let us see to it that we do secure this peace, and without delay. Time is short; things are hastening on; the "end" approaches with irresistible speed, and unmistakeable signs; let us be ready—quite ready! "Let us put on the whole armour of God," our very "feet being shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;" that we "may be able to stand in the evil day;" and, "having done all," even as faithful witnesses for the Lord, may "be counted worthy to stand before the Son of man" at the advent, and escape the things which shall then "come to pass"—not from antichrist on the *godly*, but from God's righteous judgment on the ungodly, and such as have "not obeyed the Gospel" of His Son.

LECTURE V.

ISRAEL'S DELIVERER—THE ADVENT.

"THEN SHALL THE LORD GO FORTH AND FIGHT AGAINST THOSE NATIONS, AS WHEN HE FOUGHT IN THE DAY OF BATTLE. AND HIS FEET SHALL STAND IN THAT DAY UPON THE MOUNT OF OLIVES."—Zechariah xiv. 3, 4.

ISRAEL was left in our last lecture in her "trouble"—trouble such as never was since there was a nation to that time, such as never shall be again—trouble such, that, except it were "shortened, there should no flesh be saved; but, for the elects' sake, those days shall be shortened." The siege of Jerusalem, under antichrist and the confederate nations, was, as we have seen, the immediate cause of that trouble: victory for the moment has crowned the assailants; Jerusalem is taken, Israel is overwhelmed; and terrible persecutions and unheard-of atrocities are per-

petrated against her children; dire indeed is Israel's distress! Bitter her sufferings! The sword has entered deep into her soul! Then it is, no doubt, that the pitiful lamentation shall be heard, "The LORD hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." (Isa. xlix. 14.) But "can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." No! God will not forget her, as He will prove, and that too in the time of her utmost need; then will it be that the unchangeableness of His love, and the everlasting steadfastness of His purpose concerning her shall be seen, and the truth demonstrated for ever, "that the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

Israel's "trouble" shall be the signal for her deliverance, the prelude to her everlasting exaltation; antichrist's triumph the signal for his ruin, the prelude to the "lake of fire burning with brimstone"—his endless doom. It is remarkable that as with Israel's King, so with Israel herself; when her King expired on Calvary, and Satan apparently triumphed, at that moment the cry was heard, "It is finished!" and salvation, complete and everlasting, was accomplished for a perishing world. And again, when Israel herself shall be expiring in Jerusalem, and antichrist apparently triumphant, even at that moment shall the cry be uttered, "It is done!" (Rev. xvi. 17,) and salvation, complete and everlasting, be vouchsafed to that otherwise lost and perishing people; for then it is, as our text tells us, even *then* that the LORD will fight for His people; and "His

feet"—the feet of their Deliverer—"shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives."

And this, then, is the subject we have now to consider:—

The Advent of the LORD, *as Israel's Deliverer.*

Of all subjects to which the mind of man can be directed, of all that the Bible itself presents for our faith and contemplation, the second Advent of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ is, beyond comparison, the most affecting and important. Other subjects may be said to derive their value from this; for, apart from this, and its judicial proceedings, what connection have other subjects with man's vital and eternal interests, or what real importance at all? The Advent of Christ involves all that is, or can be, momentous to man; the consummation of all sublunary matters; the crisis, and winding up of human affairs; the beginning of the endless sabbath; the establishment of the kingdom of righteousness and light on earth; the destruction of the kingdom of darkness and sin, as heretofore prevailing; the turning-point in the world's history. Up to that day evil has had the actual ascendency; thenceforward, good shall be supreme. Up to that day, it may emphatically be said to have been *man's* day, or Satan's day; but then begins God's day—"the great day of God Almighty;" "the day of the Lord;" a day never to end, the brightness of which shall never wane, never be overshadowed with darkness again, even in this world's experience, for ever and ever.

But while that day shall be pregnant with such momentous interests to the world at large! while the

whole human family shall be infinitely concerned in it; still, in the first instance, it shall have special reference to the people and prospects of Israel. As at the *first* Advent, though Christ came "the Saviour of all men," and to die for all, yet, by His own confession, Israel was first in His esteem, and first as His object —"I am not sent," said He, "but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel"—so at the *second*, though He will come to judge the world, to settle the world's affairs, to take its kingdoms to Himself, and reign over the same for ever, yet, evidently, even then, will Israel be first before Him, and her well-being His prime concern. Hence, mention of His Advent is rarely found in Scripture, but in immediate connection with Israel's circumstances, and Israel's prospects. It is in order to close her tribulation, (Matt. xxiv, 29;) it is for the purpose of rescuing her from the hands of her enemies, and destroying the same, (Zech. xiv. 2, 3;) it is to meet her heart's desire when she shall cry, "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," (Matt. xxiii. 39;) it is that the true David may be her king, (Ezek. xxxvii. 24;) it is that a fountain may be opened to her for sin and for uncleanness, (Zech. xiii. 1;) it is to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, and save all Israel, (Rom. xi. 26;) it is that He Himself may be her light, and that she may herself arise and shine. (Isa. lx. 1.) Thus, the bearing of the Advent on Israel's prospects, and its connection therewith, is abundantly evident; but for the more particular illustration of this, as well as of this glorious subject generally, let us now proceed to consider,

I. THE ADVENT ITSELF.
II. ITS ATTENDANT CIRCUMSTANCES.

I. THE ADVENT ITSELF.

Under this head three particulars demand our attention.

1. The nature of the Advent; or, *How* will the Lord come?

2. The time of the Advent; or, *When* will the Lord come?

3. The place of the Advent; or, *Where* will the Lord come?

1. The nature of the Advent; or, *How* will the Lord come?

Personally, I reply, personally in glory. Jesus Christ, who lived and died on earth, and afterwards rose and ascended into heaven, will Himself return, the same Jesus Christ, the same man, who once trod earth's highway, "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief;" even He the same, though in highest glory instead of deepest humiliation; though garbed in light instead of shrouded in a "body marred more than any man,"—otherwise the same, even as the angels testified, "this same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

Thus, I say, will He come, personally, the man Christ Jesus. And I say it in opposition to all notions and interpretations, which attempt to resolve the personal and individual "coming of the Son of man" into a spiritual coming, or venture to explain it as referring

to "death," or the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, or aught else except that which the words themselves literally import. When, and wheresoever, the Bible says the Son of man will come, I believe, it means precisely what it does say, *that the Son of man will come, and nothing else!* and to explain this of anything else, of death, the destruction of Jerusalem, or even the outpouring of the Spirit, or of anything whatever, but what the words evidently declare—does seem to me not only wilfully to confound things palpably different, as words can make them—not only to be the veriest trifling with the Word of God—but an insult *really*, however unwittingly, offered to the Spirit of God, of the most flagrant character! For does it not just imply—really and virtually imply—that the Spirit of God fails to express what it means to say? The language of the Spirit is, "The Son of man shall come," come from heaven to earth—for they on earth are to see Him—and wail because of Him, and be judged by Him—surely then, if the meaning of the Spirit is, that they on earth are *to go to Him*, to pass by means of death, from earth to His judgment-seat in heaven; that, in short, instead of Christ's descending to man, man is to ascend to Christ; instead of Christ's coming to the inhabitants of the earth, the inhabitants of the earth are to go to Christ—surely, I say, if this is the Spirit's meaning, then has the Spirit failed to express that meaning in the word and language of Holy Writ; and they who thus interpret Scripture, do, however unwittingly, so impugn the Spirit's language! Is not this more than to trifle with Scripture? Is it not an insult—*carefully to be avoided*—to the Spirit itself?

Who, I ask, at this rate, is to understand the Bible at all? who is to know God's meaning at all? If the trumpet itself, not by man's misuse, but by God's intention, give so uncertain a sound, who shall prepare himself for the battle? But away with the thought. It is not by God's intention, but wholly and entirely by man's misuse that this evil comes. God speaks plainly, and means what He says: "The Son of man shall come," says God; and "the Son of man shall come" we shall find—come even *here*, to the earth itself, from whence He went—come, even *so*, the Son of man Himself as He went, and for obvious reasons: as the Son of man He was here judged, as the Son of man shall all judgment be here given unto Him; as the Son of man He was here rejected, as the Son of man He shall here be acknowledged; as the Son of man He was here crucified, as the Son of man He shall here be crowned; as the Son of man He was here a servant, as the Son of man He shall here reign—"the government shall here be upon His shoulder, and of the increase of His government and peace *there shall be* no end."

He will come suddenly! When the world is crying, "peace, peace;" when the most remote expectation of His coming shall not generally prevail; when men are eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage; planting, buying, selling, absorbed in their ordinary concerns, overcharged with cares, interests, and pleasures of this world; when the heart whispers, if the lips give not birth to the sentiment, "Where is the promise of His coming?" *Then*, at such a time, even then, He will come!

He will come manifestly. "Every eye shall see

him." It will be clear, palpable, as the sun at noonday. The advent will be "as the lightning which lighteneth from one end of heaven to the other"—manifest as lightning, clearly manifest, at the same moment everywhere. This, observe, the *universal manifestation*, and not the rapidity of His coming, is the object of this beautiful illustration. The Lord, in the context to the passage where the illustration occurs, is warning His disciples against false Christs who will appear in the latter days, and deceive many. He bids His people be on their guard, and when they shall hear it said, "Behold he is in the desert," they are not to "go forth;" "behold he is in the secret chambers," they are to "believe it not." For, He adds, "as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be"—*so!* even as evident, clear, manifest, as the lightning. There shall, therefore, be no doubt or possibility of question about it; no need to go forth, and search and look for it; it shall not be in a corner, or in a chamber, or in the desert! No man shall tell his neighbour, it is come—for his neighbour, like himself, shall see it! It shall be terribly obvious—seen alike in the palace and the cottage; in the mansion and the cabin; in the court, and the change, and the field; in the squares and the lanes of the city; in the brilliant assembly and the darkest abode of squalid destitution; where men are revelling, and where men are praying; where the world is decked out in fashion's gaudiest plumage, and where rags and tatters are the only habiliment. It will burst on all, an appalling, unmistakeable reality—on all alike, all

without exception, all at once. "Even as the lightning which lighteneth from one end of heaven to the other, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."

2. The time of the advent; or, *When* will the Lord come?

When He will come *positively* we know not at all: "Of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels, nor the Son himself." It is known only to Deity as such, and to none else. To attempt the determination or investigation of this is, I believe, forbidden; it is one of the hidden things which belongs to the Lord our God, and not to us; and all such attempts are as unscriptural, as they are inevitably futile.

But while we know nothing *positively* in the matter, we know something, much, I think, *comparatively*, or *relatively;* that is, in connection with other events, and in regard to the order of events, much is revealed which enables us to assign the place for the advent—we know *where* it will come relatively, though not *when* it will come positively. Thus we are informed by the Lord Himself that "when the Gospel shall be preached as a witness to all nations," then the end, which includes, or terminates in the advent, shall come; again, Paul testifies that when the man of sin shall be revealed, then, at the close of his day, the "advent" shall come, for he is to be destroyed thereby; and again, the Lord also teaches that at the close of Israel's "tribulation," or "trouble," He will come, and that by his coming He will put an end to the same; my text also, in connection with the context, is to the

same effect. It is clear, then, and we need not fear to assert it, that the time of the advent, relatively considered, will be, when Israel's trouble closes; when antichrist's work is done; and when the Gospel shall be preached throughout the world as a witness; *then* Christ will come, but not till then.

And here, observe, how evident it is that the advent must be pre-millennial. Apart from all other considerations and proofs, the *relative time* of the advent is conclusive on this point. Christ comes to put an end to the tribulation of Israel; but Israel's tribulation, though consummated only in antichrist's time, began, as the Lord testifies, (Luke xxi.,) at the destruction of Jerusalem. This tribulation has, therefore, continued from that day to this, and will yet continue to the advent. How, then, can there be a millennium, a state of universal blessedness, prior to the advent? Where is it to occur, where to intervene? There is no place, no time, no possibility for it. All, in reference to Israel at least, is, and is to be, *tribulation*, till the advent. Nor is it otherwise predicated of the world at large; the tares and wheat are to grow together in the field, (which is the world,) until the harvest; good and evil to co-exist throughout the whole dispensation; and the mystery of iniquity, which by Paul's testimony, wrought in his days, is, according to the same authority, to continue to work, until it shall resolve itself into its consummation,—"the man of sin,"—and be destroyed by the Lord's advent.

Thus, if anything can be clearly revealed, it is, that trouble, and evil, and iniquity are to exist and

prevail, and, at best, be mixed up with their contrasts, throughout the whole period, from the ascension of Christ till his return; and equally plain is it also, therefore, that no place for a millennium can be found, or by possibility exist during the same. Hence it is observable, as might be expected, that the gospels, which especially refer to the present dispensation, and the epistles as well, make no mention of the millennium. They speak of the world as it is, and as it is to continue; of the righteous and the wicked, of their states respectively, and their end; and of the advent as closing this age; *but not of the millennium*, just because it has nothing to do with this age; it belongs to another age, to which they point, but of which, except as preparing the world for it, they say little. The only passage where the millennium, or the age of blessedness, is distinctly referred to, is in Matt. xix. 28: "Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." And here, just in accordance with what I have above shown, and with Scripture everywhere, the *regeneration state*, or the new age, the millennial time, is represented as consequent on the advent, contemporaneous with the session of the Son of man on the throne of His glory, and with the reign of the apostles over the twelve tribes of Israel in the restoration.

The pre-millennial advent is, I consider, placed

beyond question in the Bible; and it is a truth of prime importance. Difference of opinion may prevail upon other prophetical points, with comparative impunity; but dissent from this cannot be attended with other than most unhappy and prejudicial results. For, on such a supposition, what becomes of all the exhortations and admonitions abounding in Scripture, that we be *ready for the Lord's return*, "*looking for and hasting unto the coming of that day?*" as far as we ourselves, and all who shall yet live for a thousand years at least, are or can be concerned, they are nullified and destroyed; till this lengthened period shall have elapsed, they can by no possibility have any force or application. If the millennium is to occur before the advent there is no escape from this; a thousand years at least are then, of necessity, interposed between the present moment and the Lord's return; the idea of looking for that return, or being influenced by its prospects is utterly chimerical and absurd. To say we may die at any time, and that that is virtually the same thing, is nothing to the purpose. It is not virtually the same thing, but quite a different thing; in one case our state will be perfect, in the other, at best, imperfect; in one case we shall occupy our glorified bodies, in the other be separate from our bodies, which will be still in their earthly sepulchres; but, be this as it may, it is not death, but His own Advent that the Lord speaks of, and holds out as the actuating motive to His people; and, to put death in the place of the Advent is, as already observed, to take a most unwarrantable liberty

with Scripture, and to incur a responsibility, which reflecting and serious minds would, one might suppose, studiously avoid.

The exhortations and admonitions referred to must, I maintain, be allowed to have their full force and intended application; they must be understood to relate to all Christians, and at all times. And any interpretation which goes to destroy or weaken this must be at once repudiated, and utterly rejected. Since believers, in all ages and generations, are bid to be ready and look for the Lord, then it follows, and must be believed, that in any age or generation the Lord may come; and no interpretation of prophecy, whether of the millennium, or aught else, which is inconsistent and incompatible with this, should commend itself to our acceptance, or be regarded as scriptural for a single moment.

This is conclusive against the post-millennial Advent: it can only be maintained at such a cost as this; it virtually denies, and, of necessity, forbids the application to ourselves, and to all others, for at least a thousand years to come, of the exhortations and admonitions in question! This is certain—who that is aware of it, and well considers it, will accept, or attempt to uphold the theory?

I must also add that this argument, as far as it goes, bears with equal force also against the historical, as contrasted with the literal and futurist principle of interpretation of prophecy; for, the historical principle being true, then, from the moment of its discovery and application at least, (which was, I believe, as already noticed, early in the twelfth cen-

tury,) it became a known truth that Christ could not come until the 1260 years of Papal supremacy (the historical interpretation of antichrist's power and reign) should have elapsed; and, dating the commencement of this period from the commonly supposed year, A.D. 600, or thereabouts, a residue of some 660 years remained to run out before, on scriptural ground, the Advent could occur; and the same time, also, before the exhortations to the church to "be ready," and "looking for it," could apply! The historical principle is inevitably encumbered with this difficulty—the same precisely that belongs to the post-millennial theory, and, to my own mind, quite as destructive of the principle, and fatal to its acceptance in one case as the other. Not so, however, the literal and futurist principle; according to this, the Lord might come at any age, and during any generation, even from the day of His ascension unto the day of His actual appearing, be it when it may. The literal principle interposes nothing but what Scripture *literally* interposes between the Ascension and the Advent; and Scripture literally interposes nothing but the preaching of the Gospel for a witness unto all nations—the restoration of Israel in part—the revelation of the man of sin—and the battle of Armageddon; these are the only events Scripture interposes, and these, literally understood, would not of *necessity*, and (with the exception of the first) will not, we believe, in *fact*, require more than a few years — some seven years or so — for their entire accomplishment. Perfectly, therefore, does this principle harmonize with the exhortations and admoni-

tions in question; fairly does it invest them with their full and legitimate force: from the ascension to the present moment, from the present moment unto the Advent, their application is palpable and unquestionable! Surely this is no light argument in favour of the principle.

So much for the time of the Advent; it will occur at the close of the great tribulation, and be introductory to the millennial age.

3. The place of the Advent; or, *Where* will the Lord come?

Everywhere! Everywhere, I conceive, as far as the "brightness" of that coming is intended; this will be universal throughout the earth: "As the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." But *personally*, the advent must have relation to some particular locality; and that locality is distinctly revealed. Not only are we expressly taught that the host, for the destruction of which the Lord will come, will be gathered around Jerusalem, and congregated in the valley of Jehoshaphat, contiguous to Jerusalem; but my text specifically states that "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives;" and this conclusively settles the point—*He shall come to the Mount of Olives!* The mount so often visited by Him in the day of His humiliation; so often His chosen retreat from the world and its persecutions; so often the place of his rest and communing with His Father—*the Mount of Olives!* Endeared in its recollections, precious in its associations to every soul that loves the Lord! *That* shall be

the place—the first place on earth for the "soles of His feet:" "His feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives."

Thus, then, the Lord will come. He will come personally. He will come at the close of the great tribulation. He will come to the Mount of Olives. I proceed to consider some of the

II. Attendant Circumstances, and immediate Objects of His Coming.

The circumstances of the advent in relation to the Lord Himself, and His actual appearing, fall not within the range of human description, or human conception. No picture drawn or imagined by man can give the faintest idea of what the reality will prove. The Day of the Lord! The coming in glory of Incarnate Diety! What, what must that be? The descent with a shout—the voice of the Archangel — the trump of God — the heavens opened—the throne set—the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands of bright and shining ones, so white, that no fuller on earth can white like unto them. What, what will this be? And bursting, too, on a world shrouded in darkness,—not moral only, but physical—the non-natural mysterious darkness predicated of that awful day; for it is said, it shall be neither clear nor dark, neither day nor night, (Zech. xiv. 6, 7;) yet also of the same, that God will cause the sun to go down at noon, and darken the earth in the clear day. (Amos viii. 9.) The world thus—and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, that shout! that trump! and above all,

that LIGHT—bright, burning, appalling LIGHT! enlightening the heavens and the earth, and all that therein is; penetrating every nook and crevice, every hiding-place and corner; a LIGHT from which there is no escape—universal as the presence of God, for it is the manifested presence of God that is that light. Saul of Tarsus saw that light and was struck to the ground, and blindness seized him, so that for a season he beheld no man. And on that tremendous day, who shall behold that light and be scathless! Who shall abide the day of His coming? Who shall stand when He appeareth? I verily believe that the shades of hell will be courted in that day, to escape the brightness of the glory of manifested Deity! I believe that the great ones of this world, and all of *this world*, will, in very deed and truth, call on the mountains to fall on them, and the hills to cover them, or aught else conceivable, to hide them from that dread, that appalling spectacle! *The* LIGHT *of manifested Deity*—who shall endure it? And yet, O God! what an alternative—the fires of hell await the fugitive! Above and below, it matters not which, either way, there is the bright and burning flame! "God a consuming fire"—*this* above! Hell an unquenchable fire—*this* below! Agonizing, desperate alternative! Yet to the impenitent and unconverted; to the unchanged and unsanctified; to the neglecters of the Gospel and despisers of Jesus; to all who shall then be found without the love of God in the heart, and the holiness of God in the life—to all such, inevitable alternative! What—*What will be their thoughts then?* What of the world and its bygone

pleasures? What of the Gospel and its bygone mercies? But the Day will reveal them. The thoughts of all hearts shall then be revealed. What a revelation will that be!

But to consider the attendant circumstances and immediate objects of the advent; I specify the following as the most important:—

1. The rapture and glorification of the elect, both dead and living; including both Jew and Gentile.

This will be the first effect and object of the Lord's coming. He comes for judgment indeed, judgment to be executed summarily, and with overwhelming fury, on antichrist and the assembled nations; but before that, before one drop falls from the thundercloud above, or one arrow be discharged from the artillery of heaven, He saves His own: they are first in His thoughts, and their preservation shall be first in His acts. Indeed, His coming would be incomplete, in its predicated circumstances, without this act of grace, this preservation and rapture of His saints, in the first instance; for all His saints come with Him. (Zech. xiv. 5.) And in order to this, it needs be that they rise and meet Him in His descent, and join the glorious band. The completion of His host, as well as their own preservation, demands it. They shall swell His ranks; they sit on the throne in judgment with Him; they help to execute wrath on apostate Christendom: these are they of whom it is said—"the armies of heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." (Rev. xix. 14.) And again, "a two-edged sword is in their hand; to execute ven-

geance upon the heathen, *and* punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints." (Ps. cxlix. 6–9.)

Hence the host from heaven as it first comes—the Lord with the innumerable company of angels—will, we believe, pause in their descent; halt in the very region and atmosphere of this our world; and the trumpet will sound, the "last trump," the "seventh trump"—not for battle, not for the assault on the adversary below, not for the slaughter of the beast, and the kings of the earth, and the gathered armies —*that* is not yet! No: but it sounds for the completion of the army of heaven; it sounds, that the thrilling blast, penetrating through the world's wide expanse, through continent and island, ocean and sea, lake and river, the "dead in Christ,"—all the dead in Christ, all without one solitary exception who shall have died in Christ, from the beginning till that day—may come forth, not in mortal garb, but "glorious in apparel," with bodies "like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself;" for the body sown is not the body raised; "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body;" and with such bodies, "incorruptible," "glorious," "spiritual," they come forth. Wondrous spectacle! Noble band! Teeming myriads, even as the dew-drops in the morning! (Ps. cx. 3.) "Fair as the moon, clear as the

sun, and terrible as an army with banners." (Cant. vi. 10.) So they rise! This is the FIRST RESURRECTION! Glorious truth; brilliant prospect! let no thoughts rise in our hearts to mar it. Heed not the interval, whether it be long or short, between this and the second resurrection. Be it a day or a millennium, it matters not. I touch not the question; I care not, comparatively, about it. It is the *fact* of the first, the *distinct* resurrection of saints, which is the matter of moment. It is the separation from the rest; the resurrection out from amongst the dead; the rising exclusively and emphatically unto life, which is the point, the great point to be laid hold on, contended for and unshrinkingly maintained; because it is the truth of God's own word, the precious heritage of all His saints. (Luke xx. 35; John vi. 39, 40, 44, 54; 1 Cor. xv. 23; 1 Thess. iv. 16; Rev. xx. 4.)

But the "first resurrection" is not the only object for which the trumpet sounds; still is its blast to have further effect, and still therefore does the trumpet sound—and "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," a change, as wondrous, as glorious, as that which but an instant back passed on the *dead*, passes now on the *living in Christ!* Every living saint on the earth's surface, from pole to pole, stands forth manifested as a son of God—the mortal vested in immortality, the corruptible swallowed up in the incorruptible—each and all, like their risen brethren, in glorified bodies; and the whole assembly of the once-mouldering dead and mortal living; the whole assembly—Christ's mystical and now-glorified body—the Bride in her "fine linen"—"the Lamb's wife made

ready"—is "caught up" "to meet the Lord in the air," and so to be "ever with the Lord." Oh! it is a transporting thought; and yet an affecting, deeply affecting thought, too! For what does this import? To what end this rapture of His saints, this separation from the earth and its family of the elect, this glorification of the bride, this her introduction into the presence-chamber of her Lord? What the immediate object and intent of this? What, but her escape from the things that are coming on the earth, her preservation from the "hour of temptation," with which the world is soon to be visited? She ascends from the earth; she enters into "the secret place of the Most High;" she is housed "under the shadow of the Almighty!" And then judgment lingereth no more, damnation ceaseth to slumber.

Thus has it ever been,—security, perfect security for the righteous; and then judgment, unmixed, unmitigated for the wicked,—the salt taken out, and then destruction. Noah in the ark, and shut in by God; till then, no drop from the clouds above, but *then*, "the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened," and "all flesh died that moved upon the earth." Lot in Zoar; "for I cannot do anything," said the Lord, "till thou be come thither:" but *then* "God rained upon Sodom and Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the LORD out of heaven," and "the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." The Christians in Pella; for not a hair of their head must perish; but *then* sudden destruction on the city, and not one stone left on another in the beautiful temple.

And so yet again; the church in the sanctuary—the chamber—above, for to her there is no condemnation; but *then* let go the "windy storm and tempest," yea, the "fire and brimstone, and the horrible tempest," and the overflowing scourge shall pass through; . . . . "for morning by morning shall it pass over, by day and by night; and it shall be a vexation only to understand the report." But this brings us to the next effect of the advent.

2. The destruction of antichrist and the confederate nations.

The church in safety, and the storm comes. This relates to antichrist and the nations, and falls directly and exclusively on them. "Rest" to His people, perfect security; and then immediately following at once, "vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." For the explanation of this subject, we had better directly refer to God's own account; it is sufficiently explicit, and terribly impressive.

First, In regard to antichrist, and the bearing of the advent on him. In Isaiah (chap. x.) we have, as noticed in a former lecture, a remarkable prophecy of antichrist, as the Assyrian, and of the purpose for which God will employ him as "the rod of His anger against an hypocritical nation," which is Israel. At the close of the chapter, we have an account of the march of antichrist up to Mount Zion and Jerusalem for the accomplishment of this purpose. "Howbeit, he meaneth not so;" he has no such intention; he thinks merely to answer a purpose of his own; but he is the Lord's agent, and the Lord's work he must

do. In the eleventh chapter, (God having employed and done with antichrist's agency,) the millennial age is introduced, and most attractively exhibited to our notice; but at its commencement the remarkable prediction occurs—"He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked." That this "wicked," or "wicked one," is the Assyrian* or antichrist previously alluded to, would seem obvious, from the whole tenor and connection of the passage; but it is placed beyond doubt by the parallel passage in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, where (chapter ii. 8) we have a precisely similar announcement in reference to the "Assyrian," or "the Man of sin," both as to his end and the time when it shall come to pass,—"And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the breath of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming." The parallelism between these passages is perfect, and the identity of the persons alluded to unquestionable; the time is the same in both—*the time of the coming forth of the Lord;* the character of the adversary to be destroyed is the same in both—*the Wicked One;* and the nature and mode of destruction is the same in both—the "*breath of His lips,*" or "*spirit of His mouth.*" Clearly, then, we have, in Isaiah xi. 4, a plain prediction of the destruction of antichrist at and by the coming of our Lord.

But we have more than the fact and mode of that destruction revealed in Scripture; the curtain that

* That the Assyrian and antichrist are identical has been shown in Lecture iv., page 119.

separates between the present and the future—the visible and invisible—is actually uplifted in reference to antichrist, and we follow him, by the light of Divine truth, down to his final and eternal abode. In Isaiah x. we can trace his way, step by step, up to Jerusalem, the scene of his last triumph; and then, in Isaiah xiv., we may trace his way, step by step, even down to hell, the lot of his inheritance, the place of his final doom. This chapter is a glorious prediction of Israel's restoration and triumph over her great adversary. She is represented, in that her day of victory, as taking up a proverb against the king of Babylon, once so great and mighty, now fallen, and fallen for ever; and, after boasting of the earth's quietude, and of her own peace, even "that no feller had come up against her," since he, the antichrist, had been "laid down," goes on then to describe the descent of the terrible one, and the reception he meets with in the shades below. "Hell from beneath is moved for *thee* at thy coming; it stirreth up the dead for thee, *even* all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. All they shall speak and shall say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us? Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, *and* the noise of the viols: the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how* art thou cast down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the

north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the Most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, *and* consider thee, *saying*, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms: *that* made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; *that* opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, *even* all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, *and* as the raiment of those that are slain—thrust through with a sword—that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet."

Appalling account! But so it is written, and so shall it be—such the doom awaiting antichrist in the world to come.

Notice here, for a moment, how exactly the description of antichrist given in the above passage accords with that given by Paul of the Man of sin, in 2 Thessalonians ii. 4. In verses 13, 14, of the above passage, it is declared of the man alluded to, that in his heart he said, "I will ascend into heaven, and I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the Most High." And in 2 Thessalonians ii. 4, it is also declared of the "man" there alluded to, that he "exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." How unquestionable is the identity

here! How certain that the *man* alluded to in each case is the same! that Isaiah's "King of Babylon" is Paul's "Man of sin," and both alike—the ANTICHRIST of the latter days.

Such, then—to revert to Isaiah's account—will be the terrible end of the antichrist; such the dread reality—the reception in the shades of hell—that awaits him, when, as Paul further testifies, "the Lord shall consume him with the spirit of His mouth, and destroy him with the brightness of His coming." (2 Thess. ii. 8.)

Secondly, as to the effect of the Advent on the confederate nations—the nations gathered under antichrist against Jerusalem.

Their doom is also explicitly revealed. Observe the following passages, out of a vast number that might be quoted: "Come near, ye nations, to hear; and hearken, ye people: let the earth hear, and all that is therein; the world, and all things that come forth of it. For the indignation of the LORD is upon all nations, and his fury upon all their armies: He hath utterly destroyed them, he hath delivered them to the slaughter. Their slain also shall be cast out, and their stink shall come up out of their carcases, and the mountains shall be melted with their blood. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their hosts shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree. For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment. The sword of the LORD is filled with blood, it is made fat with

fatness, and with the blood of lambs and goats, with the fat of the kidneys of rams: for the LORD hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumea. And the unicorns shall come down with them, and the bullocks with the bulls; and their land shall be soaked with blood, and their dust made fat with fatness. For it is the day of the LORD'S vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion." (Isa. xxxiv. 1–8.)

Again, "For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire. For by fire and by his sword will the LORD plead with all flesh: and the slain of the LORD shall be many." (Isa. lxvi. 15, 16.)

Again, "I will gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and *for* my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land. . . . . Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye heathen, and gather yourselves together round about: thither cause thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD. Let the heathen be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the heathen round about." (Joel ii. 2, 11, 12.) Also, in connection with my text, "And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth."

(Zech. xiv. 12.) And once more, most awful and terrible of all descriptions of this subject, "I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse: and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that wor-

shipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." (Rev. xix. 11–21.)

Such is the Bible account of the effect of the advent on the assembled nations. When the heavenly host shall have been augmented and perfected by the addition to their ranks of the risen and glorified saints, then this onslaught occurs — this appalling recompence and vengeance on apostate Christendom, with antichrist at their head. And this will recall to your mind, and explain what I alluded to on a former occasion, in reference to the battle of Armageddon being divisible into two great acts. *The first* was performed in the assault of antichrist and the nations on Jerusalem, when Israel was the sufferer, and great, surpassingly great, was her tribulation; the *second* is performed in the assault of the heavenly host on antichrist and the nations — the effect of the advent as above described—when sudden and overwhelming destruction overtakes them, even "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power."

Oh, what announcements, what truths are here! What a time will that be! The time, I believe, of the shaking,—"Yet once more," saith the Lord, "once more, I shake not the earth only, but also heaven." A universal convulsion; a rocking to and fro of creation! It is the "day of vengeance," and heaven and earth must bear witness to the same. "All the

host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling fig from the fig-tree." (Isa. xxxiv. 4.) "The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly; the earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage." It is the time of cleansing and baptizing the physical creation around with fire, in order that a new, regenerated creation, fit for the coming age of righteousness, and righteous people, may appear. It is the time of righteous domination, when evil things must be cast out, and evil-doers must be cast down, even to hell; and, deeper than all, that master of evil, and first of evil-doers, that "man of sin," that "son of perdition," that "beast," energized by Satan—deeper than all, and alive, together with the false prophet, must he be "cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." Great God! what a portion is this, if words mean anything; and yet, not reserved for antichrist alone, or the false prophet alone with him; no, but for *all evil-doers!* "Hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth without measure"—prepared originally, not for man, not for antichrist, but for the devil and his angels; yet now, by reason of man's sin, and the consummation of sin, in the "man of sin," "hell hath enlarged herself, and opened her mouth wide," that "that man," and not that man alone, but all men like him, like him in spirit and tendency, like him in taste and character, like him as lovers of sin and not of holiness, of the world and not of God, of

themselves and their own elevation and not of Christ and His glory—that all such, without distinction, or respect of persons, high and low, rich and poor, mighty and mean, may, with their pomp and their glory, their power and magnificence, or with their beggary and their rags, their weakness and their destitution, as the case may be, descend into it; and by the righteous judgment and unchangeable fiat of God, have its mouth closed, and irrevocably sealed, over and upon them FOR EVER.

O God of heaven! preserve us from this! Yea, O God, preserve us from that *pit*—for they who go down there "return not again, neither take they hold of the paths of life" any more for ever.

One other effect of the advent remains to be noticed, following in order on the two already explained.

3. The conversion of the remnant of Israel, spared in Jerusalem after the siege, and rescued from antichrist and the nations, by the advent of the Lord.

This remnant, I need scarcely observe, is quite distinct from the "remnant according to the election of grace," spoken of particularly in my first lecture. The "remnant according to the election of grace" is supposed to be already translated with the rest of the church; and to have had her share with the heavenly host, in the assault on the confederate nations, and in the victory with which that assault was crowned. The remnant I am now about to speak of, is a part of Israel besieged and vanquished in Jerusalem, by these confederate nations—*the surviving part*, the residue of the garrison, a small portion left out of the

whole. For great will be the destruction of Israel, prior to the interposition of the Lord; not only terrible will be her tribulation, but great the loss she will sustain. All will suffer immeasurably, but multitudes will actually perish; indeed the number spared will be comparatively small. This we gather with certainty from Zechariah: "And it shall come to pass, *that* in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off *and* die; but the third shall be left therein; and I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried." (Chap. xiii. 8, 9.) Here we have the accomplishment of the object for which Israel was partially restored, and the effect of the great tribulation, through which she is now supposed to have passed, plainly stated—*two-thirds are slain, one-third is spared and purified.* This "*one-third*" is the remnant to which I allude, called the "remnant" in other passages of Scripture, (Ezek. xiv. 22,) and is preserved in order to their conversion by the Lord at His coming, and their subsequent instrumentality, as the Lord's messengers, for carrying His fame and His glory to nations afar off, (Isa. lxvi. 18, 19;) which, as I shall show in a future lecture, are destined to occupy the regenerated earth. A detailed and most interesting account is given in the 12th and 13th chapters of Zechariah, of the circumstances and history of this remnant in Jerusalem, after the terrible results of the battle of Armageddon. At the commencement of the 12th chapter, verses 2, 3, the destruction which awaits the besiegers is recorded; in the 7th and 8th the coming and in-

terposition of the Lord, in behalf of His people, is announced; then the outpouring of the Spirit upon the inhabitants of the city, (these are the *remnant spared,*) and their "looking upon him whom they pierced," with their mourning and lamentation for their unbelief and sin. And then at the commencement of chapter xiii. the "opening to the house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem," of "the fountain for sin and uncleanness,"—that is, the removing the veil from their eyes, and enabling them at length to know Him, "of whom Moses and the prophets did testify;" and *so* "to see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with *their* hearts, that they should be converted, and he should heal them."

This, then, is also an object, and will be among the most interesting and important effects, of the Lord's advent. It may, also, be fairly regarded as the last of the *immediate* results of that glorious event. The conversion of this remnant will be preparatory to, and the signal for, the conversion and restoration of all Israel, and with that indeed, of the whole world;—the very earnest and first-fruit, therefore, of the promise, that "the knowledge of the glory of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea;" these, however, are the subjects destined for future and following lectures, and our present is, therefore, necessarily brought to a close.

In the discussion of the subject which has now engaged our attention, which is limited to the advent and its immediate results, I have endeavoured to

elucidate the following particulars:—That the Lord will come *personally, unexpectedly, manifestly:* that the Lord will come at the close of the great tribulation, and introductory to the millennium; that the Lord will come to the Mount of Olives, and thereon stand. I have also endeavoured to show that the advent will, in its own immediate nature and circumstances, be glorious and appalling in the extreme; and that its attendant circumstances and primary effect will be—the rapture and glorification of the elect, both dead and living; the overwhelming destruction of antichrist, and the confederate nations; and the conversion of the remnant of Israel, that shall have been spared through the siege and trouble, and be found remaining in Jerusalem by the Lord at His coming.

The circumstances, then, in which we are here supposed to leave the prophetic earth, and which must be kept in mind, preparatory to our next lecture, are as follows:—antichrist and the nations gathered against Jerusalem, are now destroyed; Christ and the glorified church are above "in the air;" and the remnant in Jerusalem are converted and saved. In regard to the rest of the world at this time, I may observe, that there are still nations afar off, in the "darkness," yea, "gross darkness," of heathen ignorance and superstition; and still Israelites, even the mass of the ten tribes, scattered everywhere—for the restoration has, as yet, been only in part; but with this latter we shall have to do in our next lecture, which will especially treat of Israel's

restoration and conversion in full: for the present I conclude, and in so doing I would just press the following question:—

What now think ye of *prophecy* and *prophetical subjects?* Are they, as some would have it, purely speculative in themselves, and really uninfluential in their tendency and bearing? Are they such as ought to be excluded from our attention, and omitted in the study of the Scriptures of God? Look at the subject now considered—the ADVENT OF THE LORD: what, I ask, what subject throughout the range of God's word is comparable with it—not only when viewed in its own essential and peculiar interest, but in its power, *as a motive,* for the production of saving and sanctifying results? If the Advent of Christ, with its momentous circumstances, understood and believed, just as recorded in Scripture, fail to awaken and solemnize, fail to unsecularize the spirit and burst the fetters of this world's bondage, fail to arrest the sinner in his downward career, and exalt the saint in his heavenward progress: what else, I wonder, that God's revelation contains, or that God employs in the way of motives, is likely or possible to do so? Surely it is of Satan, who knows full well where the strength of his adversary lies, and what "weapons" of the word are most effectual for the "pulling down of strongholds," and bringing into captivity to the obedience of Christ: it is of Satan, I say, surely, that prophecy has met with the marvellous and studious neglect which has been confessedly, and on principle, its fate for ages and generations; that for ages and generations, not the world merely as such, but the

professing church in the world, and the very Bible readers in the church, have imbibed and propounded the notion, that *prophecy is in itself for the most part unintelligible, and in its results for the most part unimportant!* Learning, it is said, so much learning, to begin with, is requisite, that the study of prophecy is, generally, out of the question; it is time lost, and labour in vain! Doubtless, I reply, if the premises be correct, so is the conclusion—if learning, *so much learning*, be requisite, the study of prophecy is out of the question; for it is useless, and *that*, not only on the part of the unlearned, but, judging from effects, of the learned too! For what has learning, much learning, yet done for the elucidation of prophecy? *Nothing* that we know of, but only to exhibit most successfully the multiplicity of views, and discrepancy of interpretations it can produce! Let the books of the "learned" bear witness to this! But we deny the foregoing premises, and with them, their conclusion too: we deny that much learning is requisite for the study of prophecy. We say that Scripture, all Scripture, prophecy as well as the rest, was intended for the *unlearned*, as well as the learned, and that to deny this, is to rob the poor of their heritage, and to shut out the kingdom of God from their view. We say that Scripture is its own interpreter; that the key to its revelation is to be found, not in thousands of books purporting to exhibit the history of thousands of years—inaccessible and unintelligible to any but the erudite—but in that which is accessible and intelligible to all—its own pages, sedulously compared one with another, and patiently investigated, under the enlighten-

ing influence of the Spirit which inspired them. In short, we say that the qualification which is requisite for the profitable study of the doctrinal and preceptive portion of God's word, is all that is requisite for that of the prophetical; and that if a sober and unprejudiced mind, an honest heart, and a prayerful spirit be brought to the work, then will the investigation of prophecy, despite all ignorance whatever besides, be neither "unintelligible in itself," nor unimportant in its results; but, *in itself*, substantially clear as "a light which shineth in a dark place;" and in its *results* productive—if motives can be—of that "holy conversation and godliness," which, as in their experience, they essentially qualify the soul for the coming kingdom, so in their attainment and realisation, are materially connected with an abiding expectation of its arrival, and a practical conviction that at any day it may be close at hand.

Take heed, then, to the prophetic word! "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand." Take heed, I say, to the prophetic word, and, above all else even in that word, take heed to the Advent of Christ—the prophecy of *the coming of the Son of man*—beyond all else is this prophecy simple and explicit, beyond all else paramount in importance. It is *the* theme of prophecy, and the point on which the mind, in prophetical investigation, must be fixed. Incessantly, and in every possible connection is this brought before us in Scripture. Every duty, privilege, promise, is associated with it. It is the governing, animating, influential

motive in every case. Are we to watch and pray? Are we to be patient and waiting? Are we to put our talents to usury? Are we to give and forgive? Are we to eschew the cares, and riches, and pleasures of this world? Are we to have our conversation in heaven? Are we to keep our garments clean? Are we to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world," and be ready for another? It matters not, be it what it may, that is good and godlike—beneficial to ourselves, and useful to others; befitting our vocation, and glorifying to God—all is pressed, commanded, insisted on, because the Lord is coming! It is the Advent! *The Advent—not* death with all its dread solemnity; *not* the intermediate state with all its acknowledged gain; no, but the ADVENT! That is the one all-comprehensive, absorbing, momentous object, which is prominently set before us, which, throwing all other into shade, is to fix the gaze and attention of the church, and from which, indeed, her eye, and that of her members, is never to be diverted!

THE ADVENT OF CHRIST! Oh! did men believe this, and what would follow, or what would *not* follow? *what*, that horror of sin and longing for holiness—*what*, that repentance implies on one hand, and conversion ripening into highest maturity, on the other, would not follow?

The dread realities of that day! The desperate alternative then to be accepted—a consuming fire above, an everlasting flame below! Oh! children of this world, of sin and vanity, bethink yourselves of this! It is before you; it is hastening with

frightful rapidity; finding you as you are, escape is as impossible as that God should lie! *Now* is the time; *now, or never!* Make peace with the adversary while he is in the way: make terms with the king who comes with that overwhelming, destroying host. (Luke xiv. 31.) *Now* is the time! It is easy, simple, certain now; He himself invites you to it; He proffers all—perfect reconciliation, free and full forgiveness, yea, "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" all! all you need—lost, sinful, rebellious as you are—all you need for time and eternity; all you need to meet Him with comfort, confidence, and acceptance when He comes. All! He proffers all—and the terms too, "without money and without price!" Repent, and be converted! Believe in Jesus with a true heart and simple faith, and all is yours! Ah! who—*who* is to blame if you perish, *eternally perish* at that day? I "beseech you in Christ's stead, save yourselves from the wrath to come," and "be ye reconciled to God."

And the consolations of that day! An end of sin and evil, of sorrow and suffering, *to the believer.* Mourner, afflicted one, here is comfort for you, abundant comfort. What though earth's pilgrimage be to you a way of thorns and briers—so it is said—"Through much tribulation ye must enter the kingdom of heaven"—What then? Yet a little while, perhaps a very little while, and "He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry;" and then an end of thorns and briers; yes, literally so, as well as morally and spiritually, for "instead of the thorn

shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle-tree;" and so there shall be no more thorns, neither in the world nor "in the flesh," "no more sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain, for the former things are passed away." Look not, then, any longer at "the things that are seen, which are temporal, but at the things which are not seen, which are eternal." Comfort yourselves with this prospect; you will learn, in beholding it, that your "light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;" yea, "that the sufferings of this present time," grievous as they may be, "are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us" at the great day of the Lord's appearing.

And the unknown and inconceivable bliss of that day! "The things which God hath prepared for them that love him," then to be disclosed, then to be realized! Saint of God, here is much for you; peace is your present lot, and joy—Is it so? Yes, even joy, at times, "unspeakable!" Well, it is nothing—faint shadow at most, yea, but earnest of that to come. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be;" we know not; it enters not into the mind of man; it is beyond our apprehension, even as heaven is far above out of the reach of earth. But this we do know, "when He shall appear, we shall be like Him;" when we behold His face in righteousness we shall awake up in His likeness—and that is enough! What more could be granted? See Him as He is; see the glory which the Father hath given Him, and

be like Him! What more could be granted? *Then* shall we be "satisfied" indeed! And what now? what till that come? Purify yourselves, even as He is pure. "Shine as lights in the world;" be His "witnesses" before all; and so wait—yet earnestly longing and looking! but still wait—for the "husbandman waiteth," and "hath long patience;" and therefore, so must we wait—even for the coming of the Lord, but in prayer, too, as well as patience, *prayer even such as this*, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

LECTURE VI.

ISRAEL'S RESTORATION IN FULL.

"AND SAY UNTO THEM, THUS SAITH THE LORD GOD; BEHOLD, I WILL TAKE THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL FROM AMONG THE HEATHEN, WHITHER THEY BE GONE, AND WILL GATHER THEM ON EVERY SIDE, AND BRING THEM INTO THEIR OWN LAND: AND I WILL MAKE THEM ONE NATION IN THE LAND UPON THE MOUNTAINS OF ISRAEL; AND ONE KING SHALL BE KING TO THEM ALL; AND THEY SHALL BE NO MORE TWO NATIONS, NEITHER SHALL THEY BE DIVIDED INTO TWO KINGDOMS ANY MORE AT ALL."—Ezekiel xxxvii. 21, 22.

THE Advent of the Son of man, "in the glory of his Father with all the holy angels," will be, of course, the most magnificent and momentous event the world shall ever witness; and it will be attended, no doubt, with circumstances of proportionate magnitude and importance. Some of these were referred to and considered in our last lecture, such as—the resurrection, glorification, and rapture of all the saints, both dead and living; the destruction of the host that had be-

sieged and conquered Jerusalem; the casting alive into the lake of fire, antichrist and the false prophet; and the repentance and conversion of the remnant of Israel, spared through the time of trouble, and found by the Lord at the Advent in the holy city. We proceed in this lecture to the consideration of some further results of the Advent, especially with reference to the complete restoration and conversion of all Israel; and the prospects of other nations still existing on the earth, after the destruction of those that were gathered under antichrist for the siege of Jerusalem.

And first, we must remember that, with the exception of the saints caught up to meet the Lord at His coming, the Advent has, as yet, had reference, mainly, if not exclusively, to that portion of *Israel* which was gathered into Judea at what we termed the first restoration; and to that portion of *the Gentile world* which composed the armies gathered together in battle against the holy city. The immediate effect and bearing of the Advent seem not to extend beyond these. The Lord comes to the Mount of Olives—to Zion; and Zion and its neighbourhood, especially the valley of Jehoshaphat, are the immediate scene of His terrible operations, and the place of His presence. The inhabitants of Jerusalem and their assembled adversaries, primarily engage the Lord's attention. About this time, also, I believe, or immediately following it, will the rest of Christendom—all who profess Christianity over the face of the earth—be summoned and gathered by the angels for judgment, and be severally disposed of, as inti-

mated in the close of Matthew xxv., and other passages of Holy Writ. But all these classes, collectively, constitute but a portion of the earth's inhabitants—of Israel in the first instance, and the nations in the second. All Israel, as we have seen, were not gathered to the land, but only a part; neither were all nations, as we shall see by and by, literally gathered against Jerusalem, or even included in Christendom, but (as Isaiah lxvi. 19 teaches) only a part. Hence a vast number of both remain yet to be accounted for; and the interesting question presents itself, *What will be the effect of the Advent on these respectively—on Israel yet dispersed among the nations, and the nations themselves yet in darkness?* To present an answer to this question, in its twofold aspect, is the object of the present lecture. I shall at once, as heretofore, state concisely what I believe to be the correct view of the case, and then illustrate and substantiate the same by Scripture testimony. My belief is this:—

That, after the Advent, and the events described in my former lecture, (namely, the resurrection and rapture of the saints, the destruction of antichrist and his host, and the conversion of the remnant in Jerusalem,) will follow—the complete restoration and conversion of all Israel then living on the face of the earth: that this will be accomplished by means both human and divine, natural and supernatural; that they will come up to Judea in a spirit of deep humiliation and contrition, prepared thus for the reception of Christ; that they will then be converted, and universally acknowledge Him both as King and Saviour;

and that they will possess the land, in extent and duration of time, precisely according to the original promise and grant made to Abraham. I believe that, at or about the same time, and mainly through Israel's instrumentality, the nations still remaining on earth will be brought to the knowledge and reception of the truth; and that thus and then will be fulfilled the gracious promise, that "the knowledge of the glory of God shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." This is the boundary of our present lecture; that which is beyond and following, namely, *the supremacy of Israel on the regenerated earth, and over the nations that shall dwell therein*, will be the subject of the next, and closing lecture of the series.

I proceed to illustrate and confirm the view given, by Scripture testimony.

I. THERE WILL BE A COMPLETE RESTORATION AND CONVERSION OF ALL ISRAEL.

All Israel dwelling on the face of the earth after the Advent shall be brought to the land of Judea, and be converted. Upon this point the testimony of Scripture is plain and decisive. I observed in my second lecture, on the partial restoration of Israel, that the denial of Israel's literal restoration was well-nigh abandoned; that the utter inconsistency and absurdity of giving a literal interpretation to predictions which foretell their dispersion, because compelled by facts to do so, and not giving a literal interpretation to predictions which as plainly foretell their restoration, because — and only because — not

yet compelled by facts to do so, was pretty generally acknowledged, and, by expositors of Scripture, as generally eschewed; and, therefore, no more need be said to remove the difficulties or objections with which spiritual interpreters once embarrassed the subject; but yet there is another objection to the future literal restoration, to which I did not advert, and which, as it accepts and adopts the literal principle, is worthy of notice, and ought to be met before we proceed further. The objection I allude to is this: That the predictions of Israel's restoration ought, undoubtedly, to be literally understood; but that they have already received their literal fulfilment, and *that fulfilment* was seen in their restoration to the land, after the Babylonish captivity. A very few words, I think, will serve conclusively to refute and set at rest this idea.

In the first place, the prophecies foretelling the restoration, which is the subject of our present lecture — the *final* restoration — positively include the whole of Israel; they specifically state that God will gather them from every quarter of the globe, and that "all Israel shall be saved;" but the return from Babylon involved nothing of the kind, nor any approximation to it whatever. The ten tribes did not return at all! They were not in that captivity, nor were they, therefore, restored from it. Years before the Babylonish captivity they were taken captive by Shalmaneser; and from that captivity, never up to the present day have they been restored. Besides, with regard to the tribes from which the restored were taken, it is acknowledged that but a *portion*

even of these were included; many of the captives never returned, never quitted Babylon; they refused to avail themselves of the opportunity, preferring the place of bondage, with its associations and connections, to Jerusalem in its then desolate and forsaken state; and the restoration, even in relation to the tribes actually concerned, was most partial and incomplete. How is it possible to say that the predictions of the final restoration were then fulfilled? Again, in connection with the prophecies of the final restoration, we find prophecies also of Israel's spiritual renovation, that God will "write His law on their hearts," that He will "pour out His spirit upon them;" these things go together—the restoration to the land, and the spiritual recovery—was it so in the restoration from Babylon? Can a particle of evidence be adduced to show that the restored then became a godly, spiritually-minded, believing people? What was, and has been their history since? Let Stephen inform us: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers *did*, so do *ye*." This was their history, and has been ever since! instead of believing and obeying, instead of faith and holiness, they rebelled and resisted, murdered prophets, and cast out God's messengers, till at last, they crucified the Lord of life, and blasphemed the Spirit of the Most High! Tell us not, as you respect God's truth, that the prophecies in question have been fulfilled!

Again, God says, concerning the final restoration, that it shall be permanent; that they shall "no more

be pulled up out of their land." Has it been so? Where is Israel now? Where has Israel been for hundreds and thousands of years? How, then, is the prophecy fulfilled—how did it receive its fulfilment at the restoration from Babylon?

Again, God says, He will unite the ten tribes with the two, and they shall be joined, and no more broken asunder for ever; and one king shall reign over them. Was that fulfilled at, or after, the return from Babylon?

Again, was the restoration from Babylon in "*the latter days?*" for God says that this final restoration shall be in the "latter days," (Hosea iii. 5;) and unless, therefore, those days—even days about 2500 years ago—were the latter days, (and if so what are these?) then is the idea before us palpably absurd.

Or, once more, was Jesus Christ then acknowledged as "Jehovah their righteousness?"—for God says that in those days, when He gathers Israel, He will raise up a righteous Branch, which is, without question, Christ the Lord, and that the name whereby Israel shall call Him shall be THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS!—*was it so?* I ask. Why, in the first place, it can scarcely be said that He was even *then* offered, except very obscurely, to them as their *Righteousness;* and when He was, in after times, it was just Israel's sin and curse, that she would not thus acknowledge Him, but going about to establish a righteousness of her own, would not submit to the righteousness which is of God by faith, and stumbled at this stumbling-stone!

Surely if God's word, and facts, can demonstrate anything, they do demonstrate that the restoration from Babylon was not the final restoration of Israel, and that that final restoration yet awaits its accomplishment.

Now, then, let us examine the prospect in detail, or the restoration in reference to particulars.

1. The land, as to the extent and duration of its possession.

This we say will accord precisely with the original grant made to Abraham and his seed. It runs thus: "And the LORD said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee." (Gen. xiii. 14–17.) Also, "In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates." And once more, "And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, the LORD appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect. And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly. And Abram fell on his face; and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of

many nations. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; every man-child among you shall be circumcised." (Gen. xvii. 1–10.)

Observe, now, the sum of all this is, that Abraham and his seed should possess the land, from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates, and for "an everlasting possession;" and that the covenant of circumcision was God's appointed token and sign that this promise should be fulfilled.

Now the terms of the covenant have not, on the Lord's part, as yet received their accomplishment in any respect. Neither in regard to territorial extent, nor duration of time, has the grant been realized. Israel has never yet, as is I believe universally admitted, possessed the land from the river of Egypt to the great river Euphrates; in her most palmy days her territory was limited considerably within such boundary line. But allow, for argument's sake, the contrary;

allow that her possession, as to extent, at any time equalled the grant; has it been fulfilled *as to duration of time?* The grant runs for "an everlasting possession;" has this been fulfilled, or is it in the way of fulfilment? Where is Israel now, where has Israel been since the days the grant began to be accomplished? For centuries and centuries she has actually not possessed a foot of ground in the promised land; not a place to stand in there! Is it *thus* that God fulfils His promises? But yet the terms of the covenant on Israel's part have been fulfilled; the terms prescribed are, I repeat, "*circumcision*"—even "that every manchild should be circumcised"—and so has it been; amidst all their defalcations and breaches of God's law, failure in this particular at least is not to be included; they have adhered to the covenant; they have fulfilled it to the letter; they have been, they are at this day, a circumcised people. What shall we, then, say to this? The terms on which the land is promised have been fulfilled on Israel's part—they have not been fulfilled on God's part! *Will God fail?* "Let God be true, but every man a liar." Israel *must* yet possess the land, precisely according to the promise.

Take heed how you deny this—take heed for the sake of your own salvation, as well as of the glory of God! You deny that Israel shall literally have the land, though God says it! The infidel denies that you shall literally inherit heaven, though God says it! Where, or what is the difference? Adhere to your own principle of interpretation, which just makes void the word of God; and on what ground, or by what imaginable process, do you destroy the validity of

his, or escape its fatal application to your own prospects?

But now to adduce some further scriptural proofs of this restoration, and examine the promises more closely in scriptural detail. Out of innumerable passages I select the following as most to the point: — "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." (Isa. lxii. 4.) Does any one still persist in the idea that these prophecies have been accomplished? Then mark this passage:—God says, "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken, or thy land Desolate." *No more!* that is, from the time alluded to — Judea's recovery and restoration—she shall *never again* be "Desolate." Is it so? Is Judea now not desolate, and has it for centuries not been so? Why, the taunt and argument of the infidel is, and has been, that such is its barrenness and desolation that it falsifies the description of its fertility as given by the inspired writers of olden times. But to proceed with our testimony:—"And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people; and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days

of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." (Isa. lxv. 19–22.) "Behold the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; but, the LORD liveth which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land." (Jer. xxiii. 5–8.) Observe here, that all predicted is predicted to occur after the Branch has been raised unto David, therefore, confessedly after the Saviour's time; and as it has never yet, since that time, been realized, it remains confessedly to be so in a time yet to come. Again, "Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will bring again the captivity of Jacob's tents, and have mercy on his dwelling-places; and the city shall be builded upon her own heap, and the palace shall remain after the manner thereof. And out of them shall proceed thanksgiving and the voice of them that make merry: and I will multiply them, and they shall not be few; I will also glorify them, and they shall not be small." (Jer. xxx. 18, 19.) "Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to

the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the LORD of hosts is his name. If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the city shall be built to the LORD from the tower of Hananeel unto the gate of the corner. And the measuring line shall yet go forth over against it upon the hill Gareb, and shall compass about to Goath. And the whole valley of the dead bodies, and of the ashes, and all the fields unto the brook of Kidron, unto the corner of the horse-gate toward the east, shall be holy

unto the LORD; it shall not be plucked up, nor thrown down any more for ever." (Jer. xxxi. 31–40.) The "dead bodies" here evidently refer to the host destroyed after the battle of Armageddon by the Lord; and the valley is the valley, probably, of Jehoshaphat, where the slaughter is to take place. Again, "Behold I will gather them out of all countries, whither I have driven them in mine anger, and in my fury, and in great wrath; and I will bring them again unto this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: and I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever, for the good of them, and of their children after them: and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul." (Jer. xxxii. 37–41.) So in the following chapter, "And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them as at the first. And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me. And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it. Thus saith the LORD; Again there shall be heard in this place, which ye say shall

be desolate without man and without beast, even in the cities of Judah, and in the streets of Jerusalem, that are desolate, without man and without inhabitant, and without beast, the voice of joy, and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom, and the voice of the bride, the voice of them that shall say, Praise the LORD of hosts: for the LORD is good; for his mercy endureth for ever: and of them that shall bring the sacrifice of praise into the house of the LORD. For I will cause to return the captivity of the land, as at the first, saith the LORD. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Again in this place, which is desolate, without man and without beast, and in all the cities thereof, shall be an habitation of shepherds causing their flocks to lie down. In the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the vale, and in the cities of the south, and in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, shall the flocks pass again under the hands of him that telleth them, saith the LORD. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah." (Jer. xxxiii. 7–14.) And all this, also, as the remainder of the chapter testifies, in the days of the Branch, and when He is known and accepted by Israel as THE LORD her righteousness.

To proceed to other prophetical books: "Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come. Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord

GOD: I will even gather you from the people, and assemble you out of the countries where ye have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel. And they shall come thither, and they shall take away all the detestable things thereof, and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and I will give them an heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them; and they shall be my people, and I will be their God." (Ezek. xi. 16–20.) "For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and I will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God. I will also save you from all your uncleanness: and I will call for the corn, and will increase it, and lay no famine upon you. And I will multiply the fruit of the tree, and the increase of the field, that ye shall receive no more reproach of famine among the heathen." (Ezek. xxxvi. 24–30.) Then follows my text and context to the same purpose,—"Say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD: Behold, I will take the

stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel his fellows, and will put them with him, even with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they shall be one in mine hand. And the sticks whereon thou writest shall be in thine hand before their eyes. And say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will take the children of Israel from among the heathen, whither they be gone, and will gather them on every side, and bring them into their own land; and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all: neither shall they defile themselves any more with their idols, nor with their detestable things, nor with any of their transgressions: but I will save them out of all their dwelling-places, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be my people, and I will be their God. And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them. And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt: and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever: and my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them: and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle also shall be with them: yea, I will be

their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I the Lord do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore." (Ezek. xxxvii. 19–28.) Who can read these passages and retain the shadow of a doubt as to whether Israel is yet to be restored or not?

The continued testimony of Scripture through the minor prophets is very striking. "In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: that they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this. Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him that soweth seed; and the mountains shall drop sweet wine, and all the hills shall melt. And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel, and they shall build the waste cities, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and drink the wine thereof; they shall also make gardens and eat the fruit of them. And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD thy God." (Amos ix. 11–15.) "Behold, at that time I will undo all that afflict thee: and will save her that halteth, and gather her that was driven out; and I will get them praise and fame in every land where they have been put to shame. At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise

among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD." (Zeph. iii. 19, 20.) "Thus saith the LORD: I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts the holy mountain. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age. And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts. Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness." (Zech. viii. 3–8.)

Observe what saith the Lord here: "If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in those days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes?" Ah! let us learn that what is marvellous in our eyes, is not marvellous in God's! That His ways are not our ways, nor His powers and resources as ours! Can Israel be gathered and restored? we ask. We doubt and disbelieve! It is too marvellous! What! is the Lord's hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem, or His power weakened, that it cannot deliver? Hath He said, and shall He not do it; or spoken, and shall He

not bring it to pass? Let us believe, oh, let us believe! "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"

One more reference, which I have reserved for the last, before I close the point: it is Isaiah xlix., and is remarkably pertinent; and furnishes much information in reference to the subject immediately before us. It gives a description of the reception, at Jerusalem, by the remnant—the converted remnant—of the rest of Israel on their restoration. In verses 11, 12, we have gracious predictions of the way being prepared for Israel's return, and their actual coming out from far, from the north and the west, and from the land of Sinim.

Verse 13. A call upon the heavens and earth to rejoice in view of what God hath done, the comfort and mercy He hath vouchsafed to His people.

Verse 14. The deep distress of Israel, as realized in the siege and in the time of her trouble, prior to the fulfilment of the foregoing predictions, and the experience of comfort from God.

Verses 15, 16, 17. God's appeal to Israel, and assurance that she is not, and cannot, be forgotten of Him; that she is graven on the palms of His hands, and is continually before him; and that her children shall make haste—probably to return or to rebuild her walls (see marginal reading)—and her destroyers be banished.

Verse 18. The remnant in Jerusalem is here bidden to lift up their eyes, and behold the coming and restoration of Israel; and the glorious promise is announced, that she, the remnant, shall clothe herself

with them "as with an ornament;" that is, that she shall be beautified by this vast accession, and made perfect by the fulness of the nation thus brought in. And then follows a glorious description of the astonishment of the remnant at the change that has taken place; from being a widow and childless, she is represented as becoming the mother of a multitude of children; so numerous the offspring that the place is too narrow, she needs more room than the land affords as an habitation to dwell in. And wondrous promises accumulate upon her of God's purposes, and of Gentile efforts fulfilling the same, to bring up her sons and daughters from far, to make kings and queens subservient to their interests, to rescue and save them from the hands of all who have contended with them; and, in their glorious salvation, and their adversaries' terrible destruction, to make "all flesh know that the LORD is their Saviour and Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob."

The promises are clear, abundant, and circumstantial; Israel shall be restored, and the original grant, in all its integrity, realized to the full.

2. The agency through which the Restoration shall be effected.

This, as it appears, will be both human and divine, natural and supernatural. In proof of human and natural, I refer to the following passages: "Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens

thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me." (Isa. xlix. 22, 23.) Also, "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles. And they shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the LORD out of all nations upon horses, and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the LORD, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel into the house of the LORD." (Isa. lxvi. 19, 20.) "Those that escape," that is, the remnant spared in Jerusalem, are to be sent to the nations, and through their influence the nations are to bring up to Jerusalem the scattered Israelites; and not only is the fact of such agency declared, but the very mode in which it is to be employed, and means through which the transport of Israel is to be effected, expressly stated—they shall be brought "upon horses and in chariots, and in litters, and upon mules, and upon swift beasts, to God's holy mountain in Jerusalem." Human agency, however, will not exclude divine and superhuman. The latter is as clearly matter of prediction and promise as the former. "And the LORD shall utterly destroy the tongue of the Egyptian sea; and with his mighty wind shall he shake his hand over the river, and shall smite it in the seven streams, and make men go over dry-

shod. And there shall be an highway for the remnant of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria; like as it was to Israel in the day that he came up out of the land of Egypt." (Isa. xi. 15, 16.) God will then interpose with miraculous power in their favour; He will open a way through the water, as of old, and make plain their way to the city of habitation. All things serve Him; He bids the sea be dry, and its waters stand up as an heap; He bids nations do His will, and with glad homage, in chariots and on horses, and by all other available means, they transport the people to the land of promise.

3. The spirit in which Israel shall be restored.

Will Israel be restored in a converted or unconverted state? In an unconverted state, I think, certainly. For though their restoration and conversion are represented in Scripture in such close juxtaposition, as to seem almost simultaneous facts, yet in every prophecy where they are so represented, *an order*, and the same order, is strictly adhered to concerning them; their restoration comes first, and their conversion, or the outpouring of the Spirit whereby it shall be effected, follows. The passages already quoted from Jeremiah xxxii. 37–40; and Ezekiel xxxvi. 24–27, are sufficient to establish this. This order then will, no doubt, be verified in fact, and Israel will be restored in an unconverted state. But, as conclusive on the point, we have a particular description afforded of their spiritual condition at the very time of the restoration itself, even while it is being accomplished, and Israel is on the way to the land; and it is precisely what might be

expected as preparatory to their conversion, and a fitting qualification for the reception of Jesus on their arrival in Judea: "In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go and seek the LORD their God. They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten." (Jer. l. 4, 5.) Also in Psalm cxxvi. the same period and circumstances in Israel's history are, undoubtedly, referred to, and the same description is given of their spiritual state; they are represented as "sowing in tears, and going forth weeping." Doubtless, therefore, such precisely will be their state during the accomplishment of the restoration; the spirit of repentance and supplication, already granted to the remnant in Jerusalem, will then be granted to Israel at large; and under its softening and convincing influence, stricken to the heart in recollection of past rebellion and unbelief, subjects of that "godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of," they will go on their way to Zion, and need but the sight of Him, who is there before them, to cry with one voice, and one consent, not only "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," but "Thou art the Son of God, Thou art the king of Israel."

This leads me to notice,

4. Their conversion.

Come when it may, whether immediately on their

restoration, or after a short interval, it will be perfect and universal, even as their restoration. "They shall all know the Lord, from the least of them unto the greatest." "All Israel shall be saved." There shall be no single exception in this matter; not one whose heart shall not be turned and joined to the Lord. The nation shall be all holy. The Spirit of the Lord will do this wondrous work, according to the promise: "I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh," and "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my judgments, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." For then shall these, and all similar prophecies, have their plenary accomplishment. And not only so, but manifold other circumstances shall combine with the outpouring of the Spirit, for the production of this glorious result. All counteracting evil agency is then supposed to be banished, and put out of the way; Satan is then bound, and cast into the bottomless pit; antichrist and the false prophet have found their destiny, in the lake of fire and brimstone; and the host of evil ones, the army of antichrist, have been destroyed by the brightness of the Lord, at His glorious appearing! I doubt whether these aids and adjuncts to Israel's conversion, as explanatory of its wondrous rapidity and universality in those days, are sufficiently remembered.

But further and more than all as an external aid, there will be the manifestation of the glory of Christ in the heavenly city. What a sight will that be for restored Israel! The Shekinah!—Or rather, that to which the Shekinah pointed, and of which it was

but the earnest and type—the Shekinah in its perfection now restored! For what was the Shekinah, but God manifested in bright and burning light? And what the light which shall illuminate the heavenly city, the New Jerusalem, in the millennial age, but the brightness of the glory of manifested Deity? "The glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." And what the promise to Israel but that very glory, as her glory? "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord hath risen upon thee." And again, He is to be the "glory of His people Israel." What a sight, what an influential, soul-affecting sight, will that be to Israel! And when taken in connection with all besides—the absence of all that is externally adverse to conversion, and the extraordinary outpouring of the influence of the Spirit—no marvel at the result, no marvel that "Before she travailed she brought forth" . . . . yea, that "the nation was born at once."

Surely, there is something transcendently sublime, intensely interesting in Israel's prospects, contrasted too with Israel's state as it now is. That people, so wretched, so distressed, so despoiled, so degraded! For ages and generations trampled on, peeled, mocked, persecuted; "without a king, without a prince, without a sacrifice, without an image," without a place on earth or a place in heaven; no footing in the land of promise, no favour with the God of promise! That people—and then so changed, so utterly, inconceivably changed! regathered to a man, from every nation, and clime, and place. The whole land, from

Egypt's river to the great Euphrates, their inalienable possession! *All*, Christians—and Christians in heart and soul—glorying in Him whom now they execrate! Boasting in that righteousness which now they despise. Indwelt by that Spirit which now they blaspheme! First on earth, where now they are last! Oh, what a prospect is this! No wonder, when it shall be realized, that the beautiful and inspiring anthem of praise and thanksgiving, revealed in Isaiah xii., shall burst forth from the hearts and lips of the whole people. But I forestall my future Lecture. Let us proceed to offer a few remarks on

II. The Case and Prospects of the Nations existing on the earth after the Advent.

The nations gathered against Jerusalem under antichrist, were destroyed, as already seen, at the advent of our Lord. Their destruction and the deliverance of Israel was the immediate object of His coming. But there are still nations remaining on the earth, who were not engaged in that warfare, nor yet even included in Christendom at all, and who, therefore, were totally unaffected by the Lord's advent. This appears from the passage already quoted from Isaiah lxvi. 19; a most important passage in its bearing on prophetical truth generally, and specially to be noticed in order to a right apprehension of the same: "And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have they seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory

among the Gentiles." The existence of certain nations after the advent, and all its attendant results, is here clearly determined. Be they what they may, or where they may, matters not, *the fact* is all that is of moment—such nations shall exist; and not only is their existence settled in the verse before us, but their actual spiritual condition, as one of ignorance and darkness, is explained too: "They have not heard of Christ's fame, neither have they seen His glory." These two particulars are very significant, not only as showing the state of those nations spiritually, but in the light they throw, and evidence they furnish, in reference to other important points.

First, "They have not heard His fame." This doubtless is the gospel report. The gospel—which is the fame of God, proclaimed in and by the redemption of Christ—has not reached their ears. Now, this is most important in its bearing on the memorable text in Matthew xxiv. 14, "The gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." It shows that this announcement must be understood in a limited sense: that it shall be *generally*, but not *universally* true; that there shall be some nations in the world to which the gospel shall not be preached before "the end" comes: and hence, it leaves it a matter of utter uncertainty, to human perception, when the gospel shall have fulfilled its destined course, or done its work preparatory to "the end." For, since it is to be preached only to nations *generally* and not *universally*, no man can tell which, or how many, may be the exceptions;

and no man can tell, therefore, that the preparation for "the end" may not, even at the present, or any moment, be fully accomplished.

Again, "They have not seen His glory." This we suppose, of course, refers to the advent. It is then that His glory is to be seen. It is then He comes in glory, and only then. This they have not seen. A ray from the light which enlightens the world at His coming, a ray which will tell that One is come from heaven, I suppose they have seen, for, as already noticed, "As the lightning which cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be;" but His glory is a different thing! His glory is connected, we believe, essentially connected, with His person; and, as we believe, inseparable from it. This glory they have not seen. And this is important in its bearing on another point—*the extent to which the advent in its primary effect reaches;* and it confirms the opinion already expressed, that the extent is limited mainly to the precincts of Judea; or at the furthest to Christendom, or the nations where Christianity has been previously preached and is previously known. These two important points—first, that the proclamation of the gospel will not be universal among all nations before the advent; and, secondly, that the results of the advent will in the first instance, not overpass the boundary of that proclamation—are clearly, though indirectly, intimated in the predicted state of the people and nations in the verse before us.

But, concerning these nations themselves — their

existence at the time in question being certain—the inquiry is, as to their destiny: What is the purpose of God in reference to them? What is to become of them? Since they are spared, doubtless they are spared for some special object, and important end. What is it? Their very circumstances, I think, furnish the answer. Since they are left on the earth when all others are destroyed, they are left, as Noah and his family, to repeople and reoccupy the same; and since the earth is at this time to be, in a physical sense, regenerated and renewed, (as we shall see in the next lecture,) doubtless a similar process, in a spiritual sense, is to pass upon them; and thus a harmony betwixt the two, established—the inheritors made meet for their destined inheritance. This would seem the probable object and end of their existence and preservation; we should surmise it even from the very circumstances of the case. But what saith the Lord? Is the idea supported by Scripture authority? Most entirely; it is just the scriptural account of the matter. In the verse before us, Isa. lxvi. 19, God says, "I will send them that escape (after the battle of Armageddon,) and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles;" that is, among those very nations, Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, Tubal and Javan, and the isles afar off, which have not heard His fame, nor seen His glory. These messengers are sent expressly to enlighten them, to show them His glory, to proclaim the Saviour, who is "the brightness of the Father's glory;" to tell of Christ, not only crucified, but glorified; not only in the humiliation of the first advent, but the majesty and power of the second; not

only as once on the cross, but now on the throne! To tell of this! And what shall then follow the announcement; what the result of such preaching? This also is plainly foretold: "All nations shall serve Him." "The heathen shall become His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth His possession." Nor marvel at this: remember the causes, already assigned, which will prove so favourable for Israel's universal and rapid conversion, will have their full operation and influence in reference to the Gentiles too. The absence of all counteracting evil agencies, in the binding of Satan, and the destruction of antichrist and his host, will be as advantageous for them as for Israel; and the light and the glory manifested over the land and city of Jerusalem, will, of necessity, exercise, in their case also, a powerful effect. They will hear of this glory; and they will visit and behold it. They are to "walk in the light of it," and their kings are to "bring their glory and honour into it." But more of this in the next and last lecture: I merely make mention of it here, as one of the weighty reasons for what will be accomplished in the world in those days; and as accounting on scriptural grounds, for the fulfilment of the precious promise, that "the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."

Here our subject closes upon us: *Israel's complete restoration and conversion, and the nations on earth brought to the knowledge of the Lord,* were the points proposed, and these we have endeavoured to establish and illustrate from God's Word. We are thus prepared for the next and concluding lecture; wherein

we shall exhibit, if the Lord will, *Israel as first of nations on the new earth.* We conclude for the present with the following important inferences:—

1. The subject considered affords a striking illustration of the principle of divine retribution—that God requires precisely according as God gives. We have seen that the part of Israel gathered into Judea and Jerusalem at the first restoration; and the part of the nations gathered against Jerusalem at the battle of Armageddon, were dealt with, in both cases, with the utmost severity: the first passing through unprecedented tribulation; the second being punished with everlasting destruction at the Saviour's advent. We have also seen that the part of Israel still scattered, and not gathered into Jerusalem, and the part of the nations still afar off, and not included in the confederacy against Jerusalem, were not in either case so dealt with; no suffering was awarded to them, no wrath outpoured upon them, but, on the contrary, they were permitted to remain in peace and safety till the "indignation was overpast," and then are visited with the tender mercy and salvation of God.

Now what a marked, what an amazing difference is observable here—observable in God's dealings with Israel and the nations in the *first* instance, as contrasted with His dealings with Israel and the nations in the *second.* How shall we explain it? What is the reason of the thing? Is it not this? In the *first instance,* light and knowledge of truth were possessed; in the *second instance,* not so. In the *first instance* the Jews, gathered into Jerusalem and Judea before the advent, must of necessity be supposed to be the descendants of

the two tribes who constituted the apparent body of Israel from the days of Shalmaneser (when the other ten were taken into captivity, and never since been heard of or recognised) to the Saviour's days, and from thenceforth down to our own; who were guilty of the crucifixion, invoked on themselves and their children the Saviour's blood, and have from that time to this not only heard of, but rejected and reviled His grace and "fame," and blasphemed His holy name! and the nations gathered against Jerusalem must, of necessity, also be supposed to be the nations of Christendom, (for it is to such that the influence and dominion of antichrist, who heads and governs them, alone extend,) who have apostatised from their profession, "denied the Lord who bought them," and bowed to the yoke of the "son of perdition." While, in the *second instance, the Jews yet to be restored* must be supposed to be, mainly at least, the ten tribes scattered everywhere—possibly in the wilds of Africa, Asia, and America, in the recesses of China and Hindostan—who were not concerned (in the persons of their ancestors) in the fact of the crucifixion, who did not call down the Saviour's blood on themselves and their children, who have not (as we know to be the case with multitudes in the interior of those countries) heard His fame, or the sound of His salvation! *And the nations who are yet to be converted* are those afar off—in Tarshish, Pul and Lud, Tubal and Javan—and who also, like the dispersed of the ten tribes, have never "heard His name," or known of His grace, and who, therefore, with all the enormities, atrocities, and dark superstitions by which they are characterised,

are not chargeable with that, the worst of sins and climax of evil, even contempt of the great salvation, and doing "despite to the Spirit of grace!" Hence, then, I suggest the remarkable difference in God's dealings in these instances respectively. The reason appears to be obvious: *light is terribly abused in one case; light is not even possessed in the other!* condign judgment therefore on Israel and the nations in the first instance; leniency and mercy towards Israel and the nations in the second. It is a remarkable illustration, as it seems to me, of the principle of Divine retribution—that God requires precisely as God gives.

2. The subject before us throws light, inferentially, on the prospect of the heathen as such—of a heathen dying a heathen—in the world to come.

What becomes, and is to become of the heathen? This is a common question; and an answer is not readily forthcoming. People hesitate to reply. And where God's Word is not positive, it is man's wisdom, and piety too, to be exceedingly diffident. In regard to the question of the heathen, however, one thing is quite positive: they are represented everywhere in Scripture as being in a state of darkness and the shadow of death—as is naturally the state of all, without exception, be they who they may, whether Christian or heathen, Mohammedan or Jew; and the gospel is declared to be the sole instrument, the only appointed means for bringing men out of this state, "delivering them from the power of darkness, and translating them into the kingdom of God's dear Son."

Dying, then, in his natural state, man, be he who he

may, dies lost, and, of moral necessity, perishes. This involves no *new* thing to man, no new penalty inflicted, by the fact of death itself, but merely the carrying out, and perfecting that which belonged to man before—the maturing of his original condition. The natural man is spiritually "dead," while he is in this world; he is thus "dead" when he quits this world; and he goes to the "place of the dead," the "second death," when he enters the next world! It is *all death*, and the last stage is but the development and inevitable result of the first! This is the scriptural view of the matter, and cannot be gainsayed.

But, while the subject before us leaves the matter thus far unchanged and essentially unmodified; while it affords not the shadow of support for the idea that the heathen do not perish; it does throw light, as I think, on the character or degree of that, be it what it may, which "*perishing*" shall, in their case, be found to involve—or the *measure* of condemnation which shall be their peculiar lot in the world to come. For since, as we have seen, so marked will be the difference in God's dealings at the advent, between the nations that have heard, and the nations which have not heard the fame of Jesus, is not the inference inevitable, that the same difference will mark His dealings between the heathen man who dies without this knowledge and the false member of Christendom who dies with it? Undoubtedly so, as the Lord Himself plainly intimates: "That servant which knew his lord's will, and prepared not *himself*, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many STRIPES. But he that knew not and did commit things worthy of stripes,

shall be beaten with few STRIPES. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall much be required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." Oh, incomparably better would it be, and is it, to belong to "Tarshish, Pul, and Lud," and to pass out of the world in all the grossness and superstition of the darkest place on earth, than to live and die in Christendom, neglecting God's great salvation, and refusing to obey the gospel of His Son! Thousands, and tens of thousands, will there be in hell, whose cry will never cease, "Would God I had never heard that gospel which has doubly damned my immortal soul;" *that gospel* which, in its faithful reception, would have proved a "savour of life unto life," but now, alas! has, in its rejection, proved—and will of necessity, throughout all eternity, continue to prove—"a savour of death unto death."

3. From the subject before us we gather a practical and most solemn lesson for ourselves. *We are not heathen!* You and I are not heathen, but avowedly Christians; upon no ground whatever, therefore, can our destiny in the world to come be other than *extreme*—the extreme of condemnation, or the extreme of bliss. Ours is a tremendous, overwhelming prospect—up to highest heaven, or down to lowest hell! There is nothing else, no other alternative possible in our case. Oh, mark this, our responsibility is *extreme!* We live in the last dispensation, when the Spirit is given in all the plenitude of its enlightening, sanctifying, comforting operations; when the gospel of the grace of God may, therefore, be enjoyed and realized in the perfection of its salvation; when the utmost

faith and holiness may be attained, or the utmost guilt must be contracted—surely, our responsibility is *extreme!* What, then, can follow, what must follow, but destiny as *extreme*—be it with Christ or Belial, be it in realms of ineffable glory, or the regions of unimaginable woe? Who, let me ask, who else but ourselves can be fitted for such extremes? Who in the family of heaven should sit on highest thrones, if they who have been by grace brought into spiritual union with incarnate Deity, and by grace also "changed into the same image, from glory to glory," shall not? And who in the assembly of hell should sink below others, into deepest abyss of torment, if they who have "trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and done despite to the Spirit of grace," shall not? It must be so; it is impossible to be otherwise! I tell you decidedly, that no reason can be assigned—no shadow of a reason—why you and I individually, you and I who are living at this day in the world's history, may not, will not, and must not, from the day of the Advent, and on through endless eternity, rise up above angels, and archangels, and—with the exception of the rest of our brethren—above all the host of heaven; or go down below, far, far below, not heathen merely, and such as have not "heard his fame, nor seen his glory," but devils and spirits of darkness, and all the occupants of the furnace of hell, prepared originally for apostate angels, but enlarged and deepened still for the worse case of apostate Christendom! The Lord give us understanding of these things, and grant that

these lectures may at least produce a firmer conviction of these solemn truths, these tremendous and quickly-coming realities; yea, and may help, through grace and mercy, to exalt us to the place where God would have us to be—where our privileges determine we may be—and where all who name the name of Christ ought to be,—"*the right hand and the left of the Son of man in His glory.*"

LECTURE VII.

ISRAEL FIRST OF NATIONS ON THE NEW EARTH.

"FOR, BEHOLD, I CREATE NEW HEAVENS AND A NEW EARTH: AND THE FORMER SHALL NOT BE REMEMBERED, NOR COME INTO MIND. BUT BE YE GLAD AND REJOICE FOR EVER IN THAT WHICH I CREATE; FOR, BEHOLD, I CREATE JERUSALEM A REJOICING, AND HER PEOPLE A JOY. AND I WILL REJOICE IN JERUSALEM, AND JOY IN MY PEOPLE: AND THE VOICE OF WEEPING SHALL BE NO MORE HEARD IN HER, NOR THE VOICE OF CRYING."—Isaiah lxv. 17–19.

THE subject we have now to consider is one of unmixed satisfaction and joy. It brings before us the age to come, the new age, the age when the "Lord shall be king over the whole earth, when there shall be one LORD, and his name One;" when the kingdom shall have come manifestly, and God's will be done on earth, as it is now in heaven. Glorious prospect! Sublime expectation! Whose heart pants not, longs not, prays not for its realization! Who

sympathizes not with the cry, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Come, and accomplish it: come, and perfect that which concerneth the consummation of thy church's bliss, and the glory of thine own name! And yet, who will not add to this, the further supplication: "Lord, prepare us more abundantly for that day; send forth thy light and thy truth; pour out the Spirit from on high upon us, that we may be a holy people 'near unto the Lord,'" "sanctified and meet" for the "inheritance of the saints in light;" and, "living soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world," may, on good ground, and with scriptural confidence, "be looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

Blessed hope!—most blessed!—Oh! how I grieve for those, how I deplore the loss they sustain, who see not this hope; whose eyes are closed to the prospect of the coming Saviour and the coming age! Who exclude from faith's perception, as though not worthy of it, or not intended for it, what Scripture definitely pronounces to be "Israel's hope," and not Israel's only, but more, far more emphatically and definitely the church's hope; *that hope* which involves no less than the "manifestation of the sons of God," "the glorious liberty" of all creation; "the restitution of all things," and the visible triumph and dominion, over all in earth and hell, of the Son of man! Precious beyond expression is this hope; and clear and certain too, as God's revelation can make it. God, we bless thee for it! Oh! make it known to all who know Thee! and give it more of

an actual, influential reality in the eyes of all who already see it; yea, let faith so grasp, so lay hold on it, that in reference to this, as all other legitimate objects proposed for its apprehension, it may be the very "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."

The point in prophetical history at which we have arrived is this: the full restoration and conversion of all Israel, together with the conversion of those nations which, prior to Israel's restoration, had never heard the fame, nor seen the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. These things, as I explained in the last lecture, quickly follow the destruction of antichrist and his host, at and by the coming of the Lord. What we have now to assume, therefore, and picture to ourselves, is—the actual presence over Jerusalem, of the glorified Saviour, with His glorified church; the occupation of Jerusalem and Judea by restored Israel; and of the rest of the earth by the converted nations. This prepares us for the present, and concluding subject—the national supremacy of Israel on the new or regenerated earth. Two particulars demand our attention:—

I. The Regeneration of the Earth; or that the Earth will be made New.

II. Israel's National Supremacy on the same.

I. The Regeneration of the Earth.

Be the cause what it may, few, if any, scriptural subjects can be named, on which popular opinion is more in error, than that of the future and final pros-

pect of the earth; nay, few on which popular opinion is so entirely unsupported by, and at variance with, Scripture testimony. Instead of "*regeneration*," or a glorious restitution and renovation awaiting the earth, utter dissolution, and annihilation in its strictest sense, is the almost universal idea. The creed of Christians generally runs thus: "The great day will come, the judgment will sit, the family of man be divided into two classes, and respectively disposed of—one to the glories of heaven, the other to the torments of hell. Fire will then come forth from God, and the earth will be utterly destroyed!" This is substantially the creed of Christians generally; and, with a savour of truth, it is leavened with error. The day of the Lord will come—that is true; but the family of man will not be summarily disposed of, as we have seen in our last lecture, but gradually, and at intervals. The day of the Lord will come, and fire will come down from God—that is true; but the earth will not be destroyed or annihilated, but only purified and renovated. This we shall see, if for a moment we consult the passage on which, beyond others, the doctrine of its annihilation is made to rest; I refer, of course, to the third chapter of the second Epistle of Peter. In this chapter, the apostle draws a parallel between the deluge of water that once was, and the deluge of fire that yet shall be; his object in this parallel is not merely to illustrate the conflagration in the latter case, by the inundation in the former; but to convince men of the probability of the latter as what God *might* do, from the occurrence of the former as what God *did* do; but this probability

must, of course, absolutely depend upon a close and essential resemblance between the cases: if the conflagration is intended to annihilate the earth, its probability could not be inferred from a deluge which had not annihilated the earth; but if the conflagration is intended only to affect the earth's surface, then its probability, from a deluge which only did the same, is, as far as analogy goes, clearly established. And such precisely is the apostle's reasoning; on such a principle does he seek to convince and refute scoffers. He tells them that such a change substantially, as he foretells hereafter to occur, has already occurred, only by a different agency; that what fire is to do, water has already done; and therefore, that the argument from analogy is not—as they vainly supposed in their ignorance—in favour of their infidelity, but directly against it. This is the object for which the illustration is introduced, and for which it is most conclusively employed.

But while the illustration is thus useful for silencing objections, equally useful is it for instructing believers; it explains, negatively at least, the conflagration in its effect, for though it determines not how far it *may go*, it does determine how far it shall *not go* —it shall not utterly destroy; it shall not annihilate; it shall do no more than the deluge did. What followed in one case shall substantially follow in the other, and no more. The deluge affected the outer crust, and fabric, and so will the conflagration. After the deluge subsided, the old material of the earth, possibly much reshapen and changed, reappeared; after the conflagration shall be quenched, the old material,

but refashioned indeed — even regenerated and renovated, so as to be to all intents a "new earth"— shall also reappear; so the apostle himself informs us: "Nevertheless," says he, "we look for a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Such is the meaning of this memorable and vastly important passage; and instead of furnishing an argument in favour of the world's future annihilation, it conclusively establishes precisely the reverse. No! The earth shall not be destroyed, or pass away, in any such sense as annihilation implies. It shall be permanent, everlasting; and is destined yet to occupy a wondrous, an exalted place in the creation of God. Where Deity was veiled in humanity, hidden, obscured, despised, rejected, *there* shall He appear, in all the glory that was His before the world was made! Where He was as a servant of servants, "a worm, and no man," *there* shall He be acknowledged as "King of kings and Lord of lords!" Where He was nailed to the accursed tree, *there* shall every knee bow, and every tongue confess that He is Lord to the glory of God! And where sin itself has triumphed, and brought into bondage and groaning all creation around, *there* shall righteousness be ascendant, and all creation recover and exhibit the "glorious liberty of the children of God!"

But let us to the proof of all this: First, to state, as heretofore, definitely my own view, then to adduce Scripture proof of the same. I believe then—That, after the destruction of antichrist and his host by the Lord from heaven, the earth will be regenerated, or made new; that there will be a state of more than paradisaical blessedness and beauty, in reference to

physical and animal, as well as moral and spiritual creation: that Judea will be occupied by restored and converted Israel; and the rest of the world by the converted nations, over which and among which Israel will be supreme. That Israel, though Christianized, will retain the distinctive national and ceremonial peculiarities of Judaism; and that the temple service will be restored and prevail. That over this earth, and in connection with Jerusalem and its temple, will be the New Jerusalem, or heavenly city, in which Incarnate Deity, Jesus Christ the Lord, will, together with His risen and glorified saints—the Bride—dwell; that this will be the court of the great King, and from thence, by the agency of His saints, and His own personal visitation, the administration of His government over the earth will be carried on; that the nations of the earth will walk in the light of that heavenly city, and the kings of the earth will bring their honour and glory unto it.

Such is the view I collect from Scripture, of things to come; and of the circumstances and blessedness of the new age. I proceed to prove,

1. The earth's regeneration.

That this will occur, admitting its occurrence at all, at the period specified, namely, after the advent of our Lord, we may assume to be proved in the former lecture. We have seen that it is scripturally impossible there should be a millennium before the advent; sin and not holiness, tribulation and not bliss, are to be the characteristics of the present dispensation; the wicked and the righteous, the tares and the wheat, are "to grow together" till the Lord shall come to cleanse

His kingdom, and establish a new order of things upon the earth. Evidently, then, the regeneration of the earth, if it happen at all, cannot be till after the advent.

But the texts which serve to prove the fact of the earth's regeneration, serve also, for the most part, to decide the time of its accomplishment. The predictions of the regeneration of the earth, are almost invariably associated with events immediately attendant on the Lord's appearing. We will begin with the Old Testament. The eleventh chapter of Isaiah confessedly refers to the millennial age, it runs thus, from the sixth verse:—"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid: and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea." (Isa. xi. 6–9.) This beautiful description of the change which shall pass on the animal creation, is represented as happening after the destruction of antichrist as stated in verse 5, and therefore *after* the advent of Christ. Again: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sha-

ron; they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God. . . . Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes." (Isa. xxxv. 1, 2, 6, 7.) Here the physical change which shall pass on the earth is portrayed; and it is supposed to occur, as an appeal to the chapter will show, at the manifestation of the glory of God (ver. 2), *after* God has come with vengeance (ver. 4), and when the ransomed of the Lord shall return to Zion (ver. 10).

Again: "For ye shall go out with joy, and be led forth with peace: the mountains and the hills shall break forth before you into singing, and all the trees of the field shall clap their hands. Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree: and it shall be to the LORD for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." (Isa. lv. 12, 13.) Here the physical change is described, and, as verse 5 of the chapter intimates, transpires immediately after, or in connexion with, the restoration and glorification of Israel, and therefore *after* the advent.

Again: "Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will do great things. Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field: for the pastures of the wilderness do spring, for the tree beareth her fruit, the fig-tree and the vine do yield their strength. Be glad, then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God:

for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month. And the floors shall be full of wheat, and the fats shall overflow with wine and oil." (Joel ii. 21–24.) "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the LORD, and shall water the valley of Shittim." (Joel iii. 18.) Both these predictions of the earth's future blessedness are described as *consequent* on the advent.

Let us pass on to the New Testament: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration, when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of His glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matt. xix. 28.) This is the only passage in the four gospels where the regeneration of the earth is directly spoken of, (if we except, possibly, Matt. xxvi. 29,) and here it is associated with the reign of Christ on the throne of His glory, and of the apostles over the twelve tribes; proving, in the first place, that the term, as here used, does refer to the age to come; and, in the second, that it will be during that age alone that what it implies will be realised.

Again: "And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of the restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began." (Acts iii. 20, 21). The "times of the restitution of all things" are evidently

the same as the time of "the regeneration" in Matt. xix.; and while such a time is here specifically foretold, it is as plainly declared to await for its accomplishment, the return of our Lord. It is also said to be foretold by all the prophets since the world began, a few proofs of which, out of an endless number that might be adduced, have been already shown.

Again: "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." (Rom. viii. 21.) The word translated "*creature*" in this verse, is the same which is translated "*creation*" in the following, "The whole creation groaneth," — and means, therefore, the same; it is not to be limited to intelligent, or even animal existence, but must be understood to include the vegetable and material world as well—*the earth itself*, as well as what it contains; and the force of the verse is this, that creation itself, *all creation* with which we have to do, with which man is concerned, and which has suffered through man's fault, which has been subjected to "vanity and groaning" through man's transgression—that *all such creation* shall cast off its burden, and "enter into the glorious liberty of the children of God;" but this, too, as we are taught, at "the manifestation of the sons of God," for which "the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth" (ver. 19,) as the signal and time of its great deliverance;—*at "the manifestation of the sons of God,"* I repeat, *then*—when they shall appear in their risen and glorified bodies, and so be manifested as sons (the immediate consequence and first fruits of the advent)—*then* shall the earth herself also put on her

beautiful garb; her present outer covering, the corrupt vest in which she is now clad, shall be "rolled up" and put by—done with for ever! She shall be clad anew; more beautiful shall she then be than was the garden of Eden—meet abode for the inhabitation of the converted nations, meet kingdom for the rule of Christ and His glorified church.

I next refer to the parallel and important passages in Isaiah, Peter, and Revelation: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever *in that* which I create; for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying." (Isa. lxv. 17–19.) "For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I shall make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain." (Isa. lxvi. 22.) "Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." (2 Pet. iii. 13.) "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Rev. xxi. 1, 2.) In all these passages there is a plain prediction of the new heavens and earth, and their appearance is in every instance, as will be seen by consulting the context, associated with, and supposed to follow the Advent of Christ.

But now, I must observe, that while no question can

reasonably exist as to the priority, in the order of time and events, of the Advent over the appearance of the new heavens and earth; a question may, and does exist in some minds, as to the particular time *after* the Advent, when the new heavens and earth will appear—whether immediately consequent on the Advent, or at the close of the millennium. Whether, in short, they will constitute the millennial state itself, or the final state which is supposed to succeed the millennial. To my own mind Scripture is strongly, indeed conclusively, in favour of the former of these opinions; I believe, certainly, that the new heavens and earth will appear at the commencement of the millennium, and actually constitute, in a physical sense, the millennial state. My reasons for this opinion I proceed to assign, first, however, premising, as an admitted point, that the new heavens and earth, wheresoever spoken of in Scripture, are always the same: that we are not to look for more than one such change, or regeneration, as these simply; and hence that, if it clearly appear from any one passage that the new heavens and earth will be coexistent with the millennium throughout, or even that the millennium of necessity involves the physical change implied in the regeneration of the earth, the point is proved, and the time of their appearing as pre-millennial or co-millennial is established.

Now I think that not one merely, but all the passages above referred to, and several others, will be found on examination, conclusive on this point. Let us begin with Isaiah. In the first quotation, chapter lxv. 17–19, the creation of the new heavens and new earth is represented as synchronizing with the creation

of the earthly Jerusalem as a "rejoicing," which is, of course, at the beginning of the millennium, and determines, therefore, the creation of the new heavens and earth to be so too. To dissever these, as to the time of their commencement, and postpone the creation of the former, a thousand years posterior to that of the latter, is so manifestly at variance with the obvious bearing of the passage, so unnatural and forced, that nothing, I believe, but the necessity of the thing, in order to support a preconceived system, and a rigid determination to uphold such system, could ever have suggested it, or rendered the suggestion tolerable, even for a moment. But allow this passage to be questionable, and pass on to what follows in chapter lxvi. 21, 22, where God says he will take of them for priests and Levites, and that as the new heavens and the new earth, which he will make, shall remain before him, so shall their name and their seed. Here clearly, the "remaining" of their seed, is made to tally precisely with the remaining of the new heavens and earth. In regard to duration and permanency of existence, it is to be, as with one so with the other. But the taking of these for priests and Levites, or the commencement of their sacerdotal and Levitical existence is, as the context shows, at *the commencement* of the millennium —does it not follow that so also must be the commencement of the existence of the "new heavens and earth?" For, if not, where or what is the force of the comparison, or the ground of confidence to Israel, that that comparison is intended to afford? Evidently, God's design here is to strengthen Israel's confidence in the unchangeableness of their state, and its blessed-

ness, at, and after, the restoration; and the ground of that confidence, as here urged, is the unchangeableness —of what? of *His promise*—is *that* the ground? Certainly not: but of the *earth on which they then shall dwell, and the heavens which then shall be over their head!* Their own state before God shall be unchangeable, even as these—this is the argument, and this the ground of confidence! But then, if these—this earth and these heavens, with which they then shall have to do—are *not unchangeable*, but are to pass away at the end of a thousand years, where, I ask, is the ground of confidence, or force of argument here supplied? Surely there is none! It is then utterly destroyed; and the primary bearing and intent of the passage is destroyed with it!

The testimony of Peter comes next. He says, "The day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." Again: "wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements melt with fervent heat:" and then he adds, as a contrast to and consequence of this, "we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." This is, as he says, "according to promise;" therefore the same as the new heavens and earth in Isaiah, and the arguments already adduced in favour of their appearance at the beginning of the millennium are applicable here; but we may add a word on the independent and still further evidence of this, supplied in the chapter before us. The dissolution Peter speaks

of, makes way for the new heavens and earth, they rise up after it, and out of it; but the dissolution is evidently supposed to occur *at the Advent*, and not a thousand years *after*, as any unprejudiced mind would at once gather from the tenor of the passage; or if a doubt should remain, let the following passages, where the same event is described, and in precisely similar terms, be taken into consideration, and it will be seen at once that it is at the actual coming of the Lord, and not ages afterwards—before the commencement, and not at the close of the millennium—that this dissolution takes place. "The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted." (Ps. xlvi. 6.) "The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly." (Isa. xxiv. 19.) "And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their host shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, and as a falling *fig* from the fig-tree." (Isa. xxxiv. 4.) "And the mountains shall be molten under him, and the valleys shall be cleft, as wax before the fire, *and* as the waters *that are* poured down a steep place." (Micah i. 4.) "The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein." (Nahum i. 5.) "He stood, and measured the earth: he beheld, and drove asunder the nations: and the everlasting mountains were scattered, the perpetual hills did bow: his ways are everlasting. I saw the tents of Cushan in affliction; and the curtains of the land of Midian did tremble. Was the LORD displeased against the rivers? was thine anger

against the rivers? was thy wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thine horses and thy chariots of salvation? Thy bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word. Selah. Thou didst cleave the earth with rivers. The mountains saw thee, and they trembled: the overflowing of the water passed by: the deep uttered his voice, and lifted up his hands on high." (Hab. iii. 6–10.) "Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy." (Zeph. iii. 8.)

These passages all describe the same event in the same terms, and all alike foretell it in connexion with the advent, and before the millennium; and therefore alike proclaim, as a necessary consequence, the appearance of the new heavens and earth at the same time.

Besides, let me ask, will it be said by any, that when Peter describes Christians as "looking for the new heavens and earth" as their grand and especial object of hope and expectation, he really means that they are *overlooking* the millennium altogether? If the new heavens and earth are to be at its close, it is even so! Then the advent itself, and the first resurrection, and the millennium, and all else appertaining thereto, are positively supposed to be *overlooked—put out of sight!* Thus, not the coming of Christ, and the events immediately connected therewith, but Christ *as come* a thousand years, and events then to transpire, are the objects on which our hope and contemplation are

supposed to be fixed. Verily on this principle it is not easy to say where is the gain and blessedness of the pre-millennial advent at all! or where the difference substantially between the pre-millennial and post-millennial views! The advocates of both alike, then, look to the end of the millennium; alike expect *then* the realisation of their hopes; alike see *then*, and then only, the consummation of their bliss! In both cases the millennium is comparatively of little account, so little as to be lost sight of, *overlooked*, in coming prospects! I ask, where is the difference—influentially, as far as present feelings, hopes, motives, go—where is the difference? It appears to dwindle practically into nothing! This, of course, is no argument either way: it is not the supposed value of a doctrine, or its comparative value, that determines its truth; nevertheless, as pre-millenarians ordinarily, and justly, pique themselves not a little on the comparative value of their own creed, it is well to consider whether it furnishes the superiority in prospect they confidently claim for it; if not, whether the defect lies in the *creed itself*, or in the *misinterpretation* of the texts of Scripture which ought to elucidate it. I think the latter; and that it is in the misinterpretation and misapplication of the passages relating to the new heavens and earth *especially* that the fault lies, and that sore though unintentional damage is done to the really glorious prospect the millennial age is intended to present.

One other verse in the third chapter of Peter strikes me before I pass on. After saying, in verse 13, "we look for new heavens and earth," he adds, in the following verse, "seeing that ye look for such things, be

diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." "*Found of Him*"—*when* found of Him? Surely at His coming; we wait not, at all events, a thousand years for this; we shall be found of Him, we who believe—whether living or dead—we shall be "found of Him" *at His coming;* but it is *then*, also, if there be meaning in words, that we "look for such things," even the new heavens and earth. And it is in order to be ready for these things—when we shall be found of Him at His coming—that we are bid by the apostle to live in a spotless and blameless state. I see not how the identity, as to time, of the advent, with the appearance of the new heavens and earth, could well be more clearly established.

We come now to Rev. xxi. 1, 2, which teaches precisely the same. The prophet beholds the new heavens and earth; and immediately, and in connection with the vision, sees, "the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;" so the coming down of the new Jerusalem, and the preparedness of the bride—which are represented as identical—synchronize with the appearance of the new heavens and earth; but, in chapter xix. 7, it is declared that "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" *before* the millennium, even *before* the destruction of antichrist and his host, an account of which follows in the remainder of the chapter; so then, here also, we are plainly, though inferentially taught, that the new heavens and earth are pre-millennial, or coexistent with the millennial age.

There are two other passages, which, though indirectly, yet so forcibly, strengthen and support the same view, that I cannot pass them by. First, Heb. xii. 26–28: "Whose voice then shook the earth: but now he hath promised, saying, Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things that cannot be shaken may remain. Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear." This shaking, then, is to be "*once*," and only "*once, more;*" and, after such shaking, "those things" are to be forthcoming, or to appear, which "cannot be shaken." I ask, then, is this "shaking" to be pre-millennial or post-millennial? If pre-millennial, then the new heavens and earth are pre-millennial, or co-millennial; for, confessedly, they alone are "those things" which shall never be shaken again, and which shall appear when the present things shall be removed. But if post-millennial, then must there be not only *one* more shaking, but *two!* or how dispose of those statements already quoted, which positively foretell "the earth's being dissolved, moved exceedingly, reeling to and fro, removed like a cottage;" "the mountains quaking and the hills melting;" "the mountains being scattered, and the hills bowing," (Isa. xxiv. 19; Nahum i. 5; Hab. iii. 6,) all of which do, without question, refer to *pre*-millennial times—even the actual appearing of the Lord—and all of which do, without

question, also imply what Scripture intends by the term "shaking?" How, I ask, dispose of, or explain these statements, if the new heavens and earth are to be post-millennial? *Two more shakings are, then, inevitable!* But Scripture testimony positively declares there shall be but *one!*

But further: not only must there be, on the above supposition, two more shakings and removings of present things, but there must be also *two more new creations*, as will appear if we consult the other passage to which I said I desired to refer, and which is Romans viii. 21: "Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Now here the apostle teaches that the creature—which is the creation, the physical creation around—shall be delivered from the bondage under which it groans, that is, the curse, and enter "into the glorious liberty of the children of God;" moreover, he teaches that this liberty and change shall be conferred and come to pass, when the sons of God shall be manifested (ver. 19), or when their bodies shall be redeemed (ver. 23), that is, at the first resurrection. Now, as the first resurrection shall be at the Advent of our Lord, at that time also will it be that this glorious change shall transpire on the whole creation,—as Peter also testifies in Acts iii. 21: "Whom (Christ) the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things," but when those times arrive, then the heaven shall give forth Christ again; and so, when Christ shall return, then will be the restitution of all things; which exactly accords with Paul's

testimony in Romans viii., as above shown: but if so, and yet, if this "new creation," this "restitution," this "regeneration," of the earth be not the "*new earth*," but the new earth be even yet to appear at the end of the millennium, to what are we driven but to this—*that, instead of one, there are yet two new creations! two new earths! two great acts of restitution!*—to come to pass! *one* at the beginning, *the other* at the end of the millennial age! Can this be possible? or is it scriptural? A regeneration of the earth, again to wax old and vanish away! A restitution of all things, again to be dissolved and rolled up as a scroll! A new creation, again to be swept away, and make room for another! Does God teach this? Surely the passage in Hebrews which denies the expectation and possibility of two "shakings," denies also the idea of two "new creations!" As the things, or kingdom, which are to succeed the first and only "shaking," are never to be shaken again, so they are never to be succeeded by other things, or another kingdom; the new creation connected with, and consequent on the Advent, is, therefore, the only coming creation this world's history will ever know.

We believe, then, as the result of this accumulated evidence, that the new heavens and earth will be identical with the millennial state—will actually, in a physical sense, constitute it; and this is the glorious prospect for which, according to prophets and apostles, we are privileged and emboldened to look. The new heavens and new earth, together with the holy city, the new Jerusalem—these are before us: no long interval of a thousand years of comparatively

modified and terrestrial bliss, but at once, at the advent of Christ, these—the new heavens and the new earth —even these, and nothing less! Oh! what a prospect, how transporting, how glorious! What was the first creation to this? what Eden itself—pronounced to be so beautiful, so good! The second Eden will, we believe, be as superior to the first as the "second man, the Lord from heaven," was to the first, who was "of the earth, earthy." When the new creation shall appear, "the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind," (Isa. lxv. 17;) the glory of the new shall so transcend that of the old.

We pass on now to consider,

II. The Occupants of this Blessed Abode, and its Rulers.

We have seen that Christ, and His glorified church, do not occupy the earth in its regenerated state, but are above, over it, in some sort of connection with it, but not on it. Israel and the converted nations constitute at this time the earth's inhabitants; and we have, therefore, two distinct bodies or classes, whose habitation, circumstances, and connection with each other—with especial reference to Israel's position among them—demand our attention. First, the Lord and His glorified church above the earth; Second, Israel and the converted nations on the earth.

1. The Lord and His glorified church above the earth.

The habitation of Christ and his glorified church will be, no doubt, the new Jerusalem; and this from the moment of the Lord's advent from heaven. Ad-

mitting the appearance of the new heavens and earth at the beginning of the millennium, and none will question this, for none suppose that the coming of the new Jerusalem shall be subsequent to that of the new heavens and earth. Supposing, however, that the new heavens and earth do not appear at the beginning of the millennium, and consequently that the new Jerusalem does not appear then either—then, I confess, I am utterly at a loss to know where, or how to allocate Christ and His church at all; I know not in the least where is to be their abode! As far as I can see, Scripture, then, throws no light whatever on the matter. I know well that some, who hold the post-millennial appearance of the new heavens and earth, attempt to escape this difficulty, by still contending for the coming of the new Jerusalem at the beginning of the millennium; and, in order to reconcile this with Rev. xxi. 1, 2, [where the new heavens and earth, and the new Jerusalem are evidently represented as appearing together,] they make a distinction between the new Jerusalem coming *from* heaven, and its coming *to*, or into connection with the earth—a distinction, as it were, in the stages of its approach and arrival—but as this distinction is purely imaginary, and devoid of the shadow of a scriptural foundation, so does it leave the difficulty where it found it; and vain is the attempt to solve it on any such principle. In fact, it is perfectly clear, that the new Jerusalem synchronizes in its appearance with the new heavens and earth—they appear together—the passage above referred to (Rev. xxi. 1, 2,) itself determines it: "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth

were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband;" this clearly determines the matter, the new heavens and earth and the new Jerusalem appear contemporaneously; let them appear when they may, they all appear together; and, therefore if the new heavens and earth are post-millennial, so must be the new Jerusalem too, and the question, with all its difficulty, 'Where, during the millennium, is to be the habitation of Christ and his church?' remains quite unsolved. Inasmuch, however, as I contemplate nothing of the kind, but confidently believe that the new heavens and earth will be pre-millennial in their appearance, and co-millennial in their existence, so have I no such difficulty to contend with, but without hesitation, and with great delight and joy, do I point out that glorious city as their abode—and their abode, too, not only during the millennial age, but, as I believe, for ever and ever.

The new Jerusalem is represented in Rev. xxi. 2 as identical with the Bride. We are not to understand by this that they are actually one and the same thing, but one in the same sense, and the same sense only, as the habitation and inhabitant may be considered one; just, for illustration's sake, as we identify the building, where the church, or God's people, meet, with the church itself, and habitually designate it "the church," not because they are actually identical, not because the building is the church—any more than a house is a man—but because the church meets in the

building, and the building becomes its habitation and abode: so the new Jerusalem is identified with the Bride, not because it is the Bride, but because it is the Bride's house, where she shall dwell together with the Lord in glory for ever.

The new Jerusalem is continually brought to notice in Scripture, and lofty are the praises "and glorious the things there spoken of that city of God." And no wonder, surely, seeing that it *is the city of God!* "It is the city which hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God." (Heb. xi. 10.) It is our "Father's house, where are many mansions," itself the chief of all. (John xiv. 2.) It is "the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (2 Cor. v. 1.) It is the city wherein is "no temple, for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." (Rev. xxi. 22.) It is the city where, beyond all other places in the universe, "the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof;" yea, so bright that light, that no need is there of other light—neither sun nor moon shine therein; so surpassing bright, that earth's nations below "shall walk in the light thereof, and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory and honour into it." (Rev. xxi. 23, 24.) It is, in a word, HEAVEN—Heaven in reality, Heaven explained, Heaven substantiated to faith; not that vague, indefinite, ideal, unmeaning thing, which is all the word ordinarily imports, or ordinarily conveys, when uttered or heard; but the intelligible reality, the beautiful, splendid, glorious habitation of God and the Lamb; the place where Deity Incarnate shall eternally

dwell, and where the Bride, the Lamb's wife, shall eternally dwell too.

Such is the new Jerusalem, the destined habitation of Christ and His glorified church. It will be located over, and in some connection with, the earth—immediately, we presume, with the earthly Jerusalem and its temple. The new Jerusalem will be the court of the heavenly King, and His ministers and nobles; of the reigning Lord and his reigning saints. From thence will issue His edicts and commands; from thence will His personal government over the realms below be exercised. There will Jesus sit on the throne of David, thus reigning with the twelve apostles immediately over the house of Israel; and there also will He sit on the throne of His glory, thus reigning with all His glorified saints generally, over the Gentile nanations as well. The glorified saints will, I believe, minister and officiate in reference to the earth below, much as angels do now, with this difference, that they will be personally visible, while these are invisible. Special charges, too, no doubt, will be committed to them, "to every one according to his several ability;" or to the spiritual maturity and moral qualification derived from the exercise of faith, and use of talents, possessed during their former earthly career. The parable of the talents will then, probably, find a far more literal fulfilment than is commonly supposed; and "ruler over many things," shall the servant be then made, whom the Lord at his coming has found "faithful over a few."

The "Transfiguration" seems to afford an instruc-

tive illustration, and perhaps type, of the millennial age, in regard at least to the circumstances of the Lord and his church being above in glory, while the inhabitants of the earth shall be below in the flesh. The Lord, with Moses and Elias, was seen above in a cloud, glorified—so beautiful, so bright, so white, was even his raiment, that no fuller on earth could white like unto it. Below on the mount were the three favoured apostles, gazing with ecstasy and delight on the brilliant spectacle! They were not themselves glorified, still were they in the flesh, but they were holy men, regenerate men, and, thus fitted—thus by reason of spiritual taste and holy desire, capacitated—to behold with joy and rapture the beatific vision; and so attractive, so entrancing, was it, that, in a burst of irresistible rapture, one exclaimed, "It is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias!" Apt illustration of the millennial age—the Lord and His church glorified above, in the new Jerusalem! The nations converted,—all holy, heavenly, spiritual—on earth below! The vision brighter than the meridian sun! The spectators beholding it with rapture, and walking in the light thereof!—Surely it must be intended; the type and anti-type so completely fit. And do we not here see the futility of the objection entertained by some against the premillennial advent, on the ground of the then glorified state of the saints, and their connection with the earth? It is asked, 'How can glorified saints live on earth, or dwell and be associated with men in the flesh?' as though such were the consequence of the

pre-millennial advent, or the view entertained by its intelligent advocates! But which of its advocates attempts or desires to maintain this? or does not utterly disavow any such idea? Scripture teaches plainly the contrary; Scripture teaches that glorified saints—saints glorified at the Advent—shall dwell, not on earth, even the regenerated earth, but *above* the earth; "they are" at once "caught up to meet the Lord in the air," and so are ever, as to their home, with the Lord; they never again become dwellers on earth; they shall be rulers of the earth, but not inhabitants thereof; they shall be visitors of the earth, but only visitors—as angels now. Where, then, I ask, is the objection or difficulty, on this head, to the doctrine of the pre-millennial advent? Apart from Scripture testimony, which is plain and express on the point, it must be shown that "angels are not ministering spirits," and the "transfiguration is a cunningly-devised fable," before such objection or difficulty can be shown to possess a particle of force.

The new Jerusalem will then, we say, be the home, the glorious residence of Christ and the bride. And oh! let us remember that this—*if believers!*—is destined to be our lot. We are not of Israel, to be converted at the Advent, nor yet of the nations "afar off," who never shall have heard of Christ's fame till then. We are of those to whom the gospel of the grace of God is now preached; and unless we perish eternally at the Advent, or be among the lost dead who shall then await, in chains under darkness, the resurrection to damnation, we rise glorified to meet the Lord at His coming, and, together with

Him, reign triumphant for ever! Let this be kept in view—the prize of our high calling, the crown at the goal—I am sure in proportion, and only in proportion, as it is so, we shall "forget the things that are behind, and reach forth to the things that are before." It is the glory to come believed, beheld, anticipated, that will alone enable us, by the grace of God, to stem successfully the deadening influence, and secularizing tendency of earthly associations.

2. The inhabitants of the earth, over whom this celestial company in the new Jerusalem reign, now claim our attention. These, as noticed, are divisible into the two great classes of ISRAEL, and the NATIONS, the circumstances and prospects of which, together with their relationship, we will consider in order:—

First, ISRAEL.—Israel restored and converted will occupy the land of promise, embracing, according to the original grant, the whole "land from the river of Egypt, to the great river, the river Euphrates." This land will be divided afresh, as we find predicted and fully explained in Ezek. xlvii. and xlviii.; and the twelve tribes will severally inherit and occupy according to this new allotment. At this time, the temple worship, with all its varied rites and ceremonies, will be restored, and sacrifices again prevail —as we learn from the closing chapters of Ezekiel, the predictions in which refer specifically to the time, when the Son of man shall have come, and set up his throne in Zion, (chap. xliii. 7,) and will at that time, therefore, no doubt, receive their full and literal

accomplishment. The restoration of the temple and ritual service is also necessarily implied in the predictions in Isaiah lxvi. 21, and Zech. xiv. 16; *in the former of which* God says, that at the time of the restoration, and so at the commencement of the millennial age, He "will take of them (regathered Israel) for priests and Levites," of course therefore for the performance of the duties respectively belonging to the offices of each; and *in the latter of which*, God declares that the residue of the nations which come against Jerusalem (the spared after the great destruction in the valley of Jehoshaphat) shall "come up from year to year, to keep the feast of tabernacles," which feast therefore must of course be kept in those days, and involve the recurrence of the Mosaic economy. To attempt a spiritual interpretation of these passages, and argue that they are illustrative of spiritual worship during the Christian dispensation, is mere trifling; where is the authority or ground for such an interpretation? Where in the New Testament, the best expositor of spiritual worship, is there any allusion to a temple with its ordinances, services, appurtenances, such as Ezekiel's, as illustrative of such worship? Or where are Levites made mention of as significant of the office of "ambassadors of Christ," or as emblematical of the "royal priesthood" of the family of God? When God conveys spiritual instruction He conveys it plainly; and when illustration is employed, it serves its purpose, and does *illustrate*, and not *obscure* the matter in hand; but did any man ever yet, I would ask, learn spiritual lessons in Ezekiel's temple, or go there for the purpose of

seeking them? Depend upon it, that whatever difficulty may attach to the idea of the restoration of the Mosaic economy, and ritual worship, a hundredfold more attaches to that of converting Ezekiel's "temple" into a school of spiritual instruction, and the "Levites" of Isaiah into "the royal priesthood" of Christian believers!

But vain as is the attempt to spiritualize, and thus explain away the natural bearing and sense of these passages, worse than vain is it to urge, as some do, the *unreasonableness* of what they present and predict, as an argument against their literal fulfilment. 'Of what use,' it is asked, 'to restore at a future day, the Mosaic and ritual service?' and the question is thought unanswerable. Be it so, I reply—be it so, that the question is unanswerable, that we cannot tell the use—what then? Can there be no use, because we cannot discover it? Are we, then, really judges in this matter? Are we competent, or authorized to decide on the merits of the case, and interpret accordingly? Are we really to assume that a given ordinance or law of God, be it what it may, can be of no use, because we see it not, and then proceed to expunge the same from the code of Scripture, or deny its obvious meaning, without more ado? What would become of the Bible, or what Bible would have ever existed, on this principle? Who, in the world, among the wisest of the sons of men, or sons of God either, would have intuitively discerned, or, if proposed to his acceptance, approved in the first instance, the Mosaic economy? Who would not have deemed, and denounced, if left

to his own judgment and taste, the Levitical law, or much of it at least, as frivolous in itself, and vexatious in its appliances? Who, I ask, would ever have ordained it as the absolute rule for the guidance and control of a whole nation? And shall we then really venture, on the ground of our own judgment and taste, summarily to settle the question of its future recurrence? Shall we really, just because we cannot again see its necessity or use, venture to deny the possibility of its reordination and re-establishment?—yea, though God himself in His own Word so plainly intimate it, that were it not for the prejudged and predetermined improbability of the thing, none, we presume, would entertain a question about it.

Of all principles that can be applied to the interpretation of Scripture, that which determines its meaning and claim to our regard—be it doctrine, precept, or prophecy—on the ground of its prejudged merits, or its apparent worth and reasonableness, is the very worst. It involves the essence of infidelity. It is rationalism in its worst sense; and rationalism is infidelity. "Speak, Lord, and thy servant heareth;" this is the principle and disposition wherewith to approach the Bible, and none other—unless we mean to insult God, and shut out all possibility of light and learning from our own souls. We are to hear, and receive, because, and only because, *in the first instance*, the Lord speaketh! With the reason of the thing we have, *in the first instance*, nothing to do; what had Abraham to do with the reason of the thing, or what did he know of it, when bid to slay his son? Our province at present is not to know what God *does*

(John xiii. 7), but to believe and do what God *says*. This is our province, *always* our province now; and happy and blessed is he who cordially recognises it; his mistakes, at all rates, if he make any, will be safe ones, originating in the honest desire to be wise, precisely and only, *as* "it is written," and not be wise at all *above* what is "written;" and will convict him, therefore, at the worst, of no other fault than a too childlike simplicity of faith, a too literal acceptance of his Father's Word.

But while we maintain this principle of interpretation thoroughly, and that we are to believe what God says and predicts, without hesitation, and without respect to our comprehension of the reason of the thing—still we may inquire, and ought to inquire, whether any reasons are directly or indirectly revealed, and thankfully accept, and be instructed by them, if they are. So, in the case before us, I ask, are there no reasons, reasons scripturally probable, for the restoration of the ritual services and peculiarities of the Mosaic ceremonial and sacrificial law? Does not the predicted permanency of Israel's distinction as a nation, seem to be a reason? Israel is to be converted and Christianized; but if, at the same time, Judaism is to be lost, merged in Christianity, how is the distinction to be maintained? Observe, God says, their "seed and their name shall remain," and this immediately in connection with the prediction that he will "take of them for priests and Levites," (Isa. lxvi. 21, 22,) as though the former were to be secured by means of the latter, or that he actually took priests and Levites, and so reordained the Levitical service, in

order that Israel might remain, *as Israel*, ever before him; and, indeed, it seems difficult to know how otherwise this could be effected.

Again, The promise of the Lord to the apostles, that after the Advent they shall sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, seems to present a similar reason, for how are the tribes to be distinct, and the apostles to exercise such judicial rule, if the peculiarities of Judaism, the rites and ceremonies of the Levitical law, no longer exist? Or, once more, may it not be possible that the law should yet do *retrospectively*, what it was intended to do, but failed to do, *prospectively?* It was intended to point forward to Christ; it failed to do so: Israel did not see Christ as the "end of the law," but viewed Him as an impostor, cast Him out, and slew Him! The law must not be in vain even to them; it must, yet, peradventure, point back to Christ, and teach them *retrospectively*—what it was intended to teach *prospectively*—the sacrificial and expiatory nature of His work! They will see Him in glory, it is true, in the heavenly city, on the throne, and they themselves will be living in light and joy, on the regenerated earth; but they must learn *through what* He passed to that throne, and *through what* they have been brought to so glorious an inheritance; and the law will possibly be their schoolmaster to teach them this.

Thus, the sacrifices themselves (presenting, however, the object in a stronger light) may *virtually* be to them, just what the sacrament of the "Supper" is *actually* to us; and they, in the former, may continually show forth the Lord's death, when He *shall*

have come, as we continually, in the latter, do show forth the Lord's death *till He come.*

It is a remarkable fact, and worthy of notice here, that God's dealings with Israel, both by means of the law and Gospel, have, in reference to their primary intention, notably failed. I have already shown this in relation to the Gospel, or the first advent of our blessed Lord, and His precursor John the Baptist; and we have now just seen the same in relation to the law; and hence, as it appears, there is to be, through mercy, a repetition of the gracious instrumentality, in both cases, at a future day. Israel rejected the Messiah in the person of the Lord Jesus, and behold! *to Israel is Jesus to come again.* Israel rejected Elias in the person of John the Baptist, and, behold! *to Israel is Elias to come again.* Israel rejected the law, by refusing to be schooled by it into the knowledge of Christ, and, behold! to *Israel is the law to come again.* This is very remarkable, and shows, at least, that in maintaining the reinstitution of the legal economy, we maintain *that* which is not only supported by the plain letter of Scripture, but which is also in perfect harmony with all the rest of God's dealings—whether viewed in their present effect, or future repetition—with this "peculiar people."

I would just add here, before I pass on, that there is a passage in the Apocrypha, exceedingly pertinent to the subject before us, and worthy of attention. It occurs in 2 Maccabees ii. 5–8, and runs thus: "And when Jeremy came thither (to a certain mountain) he found a hollow cave, wherein he laid the tabernacle, and the ark, and the altar of incense, and so stopped

the door. And some of those that followed him came to mark the way, but they could not find it. Which when Jeremy perceived, he blamed them, saying, As for that place, it shall be unknown until the time that God shall gather His people again together, and receive them unto mercy. Then shall the Lord show them these things, and the glory of the Lord shall appear, and the cloud also as it was showed under Moses, and as when Solomon desired that the place might be honourably sanctified." The apocryphal books were written after the withdrawal of the Shekinah from the temple, and the spirit of prophecy from Israel; and, therefore, were never, either by that people, or Christians (till the Council of Trent), considered canonical, or inspired, or of any weight for the establishment of doctrine; but their authority and authenticity, as historical records—records of historical facts and opinions—have been generally acknowledged. Viewing, then, the above passage merely in this light—as an historical record—it must be admitted to possess considerable interest; and to show that the impression did even then exist, that these essential utensils in temple furniture would at some future period be again put into requisition, and is not therefore, as some suppose, the mere fanciful interpretation or vain imagination of these latter days.

But Israel's distinction in those days involves more than her national peculiarities; it involves also her national superiority. Israel shall be supreme, first of nations, on the regenerated earth. The twelve apostles, we learn, shall enjoy a sort of priority in glory; they are to sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes

of Israel—doubtless to be, in the sense of the "judges" of old, rulers over Israel. So that not only shall the apostles have peculiar exaltation in the heavenly city, but shall also have special dominion over those who are destined to enjoy supremacy on the regenerated earth. For such, I repeat, is Israel's destiny; her supremacy over the nations, though not largely detailed, is plainly set forth in the following passages:—"Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night; that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. . . . . The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despise thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel." (Isa. lx. 11–14.) "But ye shall be named the priests of the LORD: men shall call you the ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves. . . . . And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the LORD hath blessed." (Isa. lxi. 6, 9.) "At that time will I bring you again, even in the time that I gather you: for I will make you a name and a praise among all people of the earth, when I turn back your captivity before your eyes, saith the LORD." (Zeph. iii. 20.) "And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts." (Mal. iii. 12.)

These are sufficient for our purpose; they plainly foretell Israel's exaltation and superiority in the sight, and by the acknowledgment, of all nations on earth in those glorious days. Not only that she shall be distinct, separate from the rest, never mingled or confounded with others, but pre-eminent above others—"a praise in all the world!"—a peculiar nation, even among the converted nations; a wonder and object of admiration, because of the special blessing from above that shall rest upon her. Her city and her land will be the centre of light, and, probably, of beauty and fertility, even in the regenerated earth. Over the city will be the new Jerusalem—the palace of the King and his court; and through that city, as the medium of communication, probably, will intercourse betwixt the occupants of the new Jerusalem and the nations on earth be maintained. Besides, all nations are appointed to go up to Jerusalem at certain seasons: *there* shall their chief joy and privilege be found, and there, too, in a sense, shall their service be rendered, not only to the Lord, but to his people Israel: for, as above, "the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish;" and they who once boasted over and despised the "city of solemnities," shall then look upon it as the favoured of the Lord, "The Zion of the Holy One of Israel."

Such will be Israel's state, such her exaltation on the new earth. Her captivity turned again; her conversion universal and perfect; her supremacy unquestioned; her land restored, not only to her for a possession, but in itself to surpassing fertility and beauty; and, above all, her King come, manifested—even the true David reigning in Zion, according as it is written:

"And my servant David shall be their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them; and I will place them, and multiply them, and will set my sanctuary in the midst of them for evermore. My tabernacle, also, shall be with them; yea, I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And the heathen shall know that I, the LORD, do sanctify Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore." (Ezek. xxxvii. 25–28.)

Secondly, THE NATIONS.—These constitute the other class of mankind that shall occupy the regenerated earth. They are the nations left, after the destruction of antichrist and his host in the valley of Jehoshaphat; "the nations afar off," who had never heard of Christ's name nor seen His glory; the nations converted, subsequently to the restoration of Israel; the nations among whom Israel, as we have just seen, holds pre-eminent superiority. These nations occupy the earth generally, as distinct from Judea in particular. Little is revealed concerning them beyond what has been already incidentally noticed, namely, their full conversion, consequent on Israel's, (Rom. xi. 12;) and the accomplishment, by this means, of the glorious prediction, that "Christ shall have the heathen for His inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for His possession." Also, their blessedness and privilege are declared, that "they walk in the light of the new Jerusalem, and their kings do bring their glory and honour into it." And their duty in one important respect is likewise mentioned, and

has been adverted to, that "they shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles." The "feast of tabernacles" was an ordinance of peculiar joy to Israel, designed to bring to their remembrance their wanderings in the wilderness, and in view of past troubles, enhance the present rest and joy of Canaan. So, possibly, in the millennial age, the nations may be required to keep the feast of tabernacles for much the same purpose; it may serve to remind them of past wanderings and troubles in the former age of sin and sorrow; and the recollection of their bygone pilgrimage, enhancing the "glorious rest" they then realize, may elicit louder praises, and induce deeper and more heartfelt gratitude to Him who sits on the throne above, even the Lamb, for ever and ever! But we know not: the fact is predicted, and that is enough: *so* it is written, and *so* we believe! We wait for light: in this particular, as in many, many others, we "see but through a glass darkly," and "know but in part;" yet a little while and we shall see "face to face," and "know even as also we are now known."

And here we draw to a close. Concerning Israel we have nothing more to add. Her history rests at the point at which we have arrived; it changes no more. So far as I can see in the Word of God, Israel is left where we have now supposed her to be, *first of nations on the regenerated earth*, and left there, and thus, for ever. This her state and position is declared to be perpetual; and they, who

object to this view, must contend the point, not with human authority, but with the following statements of the Word of God:—"For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before me, saith the LORD, so shall your seed and your name remain." (Isa. lxvi. 22.) "Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; the LORD of hosts is his name." "If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before me for ever." (Jer. xxxi. 35, 36.) Also: "And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children, and their children's children for ever, and my servant David shall be their prince for ever." (Ezek. xxxvii. 25.) This testimony is plain and decisive—at least if not, no language could be so,—and it determines conclusively that Israel's state and position, as occupants of Judea, and first of nations on the regenerated earth, shall be permanent—it shall be unchanged, "not plucked up, nor thrown down any more, for ever."

In regard to the rest—the Lord and His church in the new Jerusalem, and the nations on earth—and their prospects, they abide as already described, at least for a thousand years, and, as I believe, the same afterwards, and onwards, even for ever. I see nothing in the Bible at variance with this. The

judgment of the wicked, come when it may, will affect none of these parties generally—at most only *individuals,* out of the nations, who may die as sinners, during the millennium; and *that only* on the supposition that such judgment shall transpire at the close, and not at the commencement, of the millennium, which is a matter of great question and uncertainty. And as to the other events which are predicted to occur then, they seem to leave, as far as I can see, these classes or communities much as we have left them now. At the close of the millennium Satan is again to be loosed, and a wide-spread and terrible apostasy to be the result; and the assembled apostate nations are to assault the "camp of the saints and the beloved city," but they hurt not the saints, neither take the city, but fire comes down out of heaven and devours them all. (Rev. xx. 7–9.) What portion of the nations may then be destroyed we know not; but as in the assault *before* the millennium, so probably in this *after* the millennium, many will be spared; and so then, the classes or communities alluded to, namely, *The Lord and his Bride—Converted Israel—and the Nations on earth*—would still occupy the same positions, respectively and relatively, they did before the apostasy, and during the millennial age: *The Lord and His Bride,* the new Jerusalem, above the earth; *Israel,* the land of promise, first on the earth; *and the Nations,* subordinate to Israel, the rest of the earth: and so, it appears to me, it will be: such, as far as I gather from Scripture, will be the closing, and yet

ever-continuing, circumstances of the world's history. What new manifestations of infinite wisdom and love —what bright discoveries and emanations of creative energy—what further blessedness even to the new earth itself—what new arrangement and combination of present existences, may be forthcoming through all eternity, for the admiration and delight of God's redeemed ones, and angelic intelligences, we know not; but this we know—and it is enough—that the church, of which we who believe are members, shall be with Christ where He is; see Christ as He is; and behold Christ's glory, even the glory he had with the Father before the world was made. This, at least, will be her portion—never to be diminished, and how to be increased, it passeth knowledge to conceive! Beyond this we need not inquire; beyond this it would seem impossible for God to give, impossible at least, surely, for finite being to receive.

And now I have only to express my cordial hope, and unfeigned prayer to God, that whatever else may, or may not, come of these lectures, one result at least may attend them—a more diligent, painstaking, prayerful study of the Word of God, not only as a whole, but also with special reference to the prophetical portion thereof. The unquestionable benefit, the assured blessing, apart from the plain duty of the thing, ought at once to insure this. People complain of sameness in Holy Scripture, of difficulty to keep up a lively interest in its study and investigation. And how is it possible to be otherwise, when the most intensely-interesting portions,

the most diversified in subject-matter, the most animating in prospective influence, the most stirring in immediate tendency, are deliberately and systematically passed by? There must be, thus, a sameness in Scripture; how is it possible to be otherwise? And how is it possible that a lively and growing interest in its investigation and research should thus be sustained? *Study prophecy;* not to the exclusion of the rest of the Bible, not to the comparative neglect of other portions—God forbid! but give it its proper place; and give it the proportion of time and thought it justly demands, from the proportion it bears to the rest of God's Word; abundantly will it recompense both; the harvest will fully repay the labour; the seed sown will be returned in a wonderful accession of knowledge, light, joy; yea, in such a realization of future and eternal prospects, as will carry the soul triumphantly onward in its heavenward course, even "from strength to strength," till it appear before God in Zion.

For my own part, I cannot express the satisfaction and profit I have derived from the preparation and delivery of these lectures. Most materially have they subserved—I say it with much thankfulness—both the enlargement and confirmation of my original views. Truth is, as I trust, my object in prophetical, as in all other investigation; and truth, God knows, is my object in preaching, whether it relate to things present or future, preceptive or prophetical: and did I now question the principle of interpretation, which has been employed throughout these lectures for the elucidation

of prophecy, at once would I say so; and *unsay*, as far as I could, all that has been advanced. But I do not question it, I entertain no doubt about it, (beyond such doubt as must be allowed to attach to whatever is not absolutely decided by Scripture, or absolutely certain from the nature of the case;) on the contrary, every additional lecture, as I have proceeded in the course, has afforded to my own mind additional proof that it is scriptural and sound; and the result of the whole, in this respect, is a firm conviction—*that as all Scripture is intended for all men, so the literal principle of interpretation, which is the only principle possible for all men, is the principle intended for the interpretation of all Scripture. And that it is the only principle which, fairly and wisely applied, can unlock the treasures of God's Word, and unfold to the eye of faith an intelligible, consistent view of those "good things" to come, "which God has prepared for them that love him."* May the Lord commend this principle, if it be true, to the acceptance of all His people; and convince me of my error, if it be not so; and in order to this, incline our hearts to the instant and prayerful study of His own Word thoroughly and throughout; for thus only can we expect any blessing from above, and especially that greatest of all blessings, to be guided into all truth.

One word more and I have done. The attendance at these lectures has been unexpectedly great; and the interest with which they have been listened to marked and intense. This has been a source of great comfort and encouragement to me, and has often sent me home

rejoicing. But *I look forward!* and I want ulterior results. The day is at hand when attendance and attention, however great the former and undivided the latter, will be estimated only according to the effect they have produced; when the question will be, not *how much were we interested,* but *how much were we profited?* And this is the question, the only question of moment now. The prospects before us, now matters of discussion and objects of faith, will soon be transformed into actual tremendous realities—realities in which we, with the rest of the world, must have our part; and the question is, what will that part be? *The Lord will come!* Apart from all questionable or debatable subjects, *The Lord will come,* and come for judgment — to save His own, and everlastingly destroy the ungodly and sinner—this at least is certain. What, then, I ask, will be our portion then? How will it be with us at that momentous time? This is the question! Have these lectures forced the consideration of this on our souls? Have they awakened us from the deadly stupor of sin or pleasure? Have they sent us, if hitherto unconverted, to our homes and hearts—oh, consider it well and answer it fairly—Have they sent us to our homes and hearts, saying individually, "*Away with trifles; dying unconverted, I am lost for ever, and time is short; I will at once to the Lord for mercy and grace; the time past shall suffice for folly, henceforth, God helping me, my soul, and my soul's salvation, shall be the grand concern?*" Has it been so? Is it so now, in feeling, purpose, effort?

Say, O sinner, worldling, child of vanity, who has heard these lectures — *I solemnly ask thee, is it so?*

Or, again, have such impressions, if already existing, been deepened and quickened? Has the bond which knits thy soul to Christ been drawn closer and tighter? Has the anchor of hope been driven further within the vail? Has the grasp of faith which holds on to the Rock of ages, from which neither earth nor hell shall ever dislodge it, been clenched anew? Has this followed, O believer, in thy case, from the delivery of these lectures? Is it so?—affectionately, anxiously, I ask thee—Is it so? Then *these* are the results I covet —these the results I supplicate from God. Attendance and attention are good indeed, valuable, exceedingly valuable and encouraging to a minister: but effects, oh yes, effects, fruit, harvest—*souls saved, and saved souls confirmed and edified*—these are better! Oh, without these the other is worthless! God Almighty grant these to me; God Almighty grant such fruit, such results to these lectures—*souls saved, and saved souls confirmed and matured for glory!* So when that day shall come, when that light shall burst on the astonished world—"as the lightning which lighteneth from one end of heaven to the other;" when the cry shall reverberate over the earth's surface, and through the earth's graveyard—"Behold the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him!"—and the assembly of the "just" shall rise to obey it—then, O Living God! grant that this people may, without one solitary exception, be found among the glorious

throng; and, entering in through "the gates of the city," may dwell "in the house not made with hands," and "behold the beauty of the Lord, and inquire in His temple" for ever.

THE END.

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